NO BABY in THE HOUSE.

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The Doctor's Frog. p. 42.

NO BABY IN THE HOUSE,

AND OTHER STORIES,

FOR CHILDREN.

By
Clara G. Collins

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TO SEWALL,

THE BABY IN THE HOUSE,

THIS BUNDLE OF TWIGS IS DEDICATED.

AND THAT ALL BUNDLES OF TWIGS DEDICATED TO HIM,

MAY BE AS HARMLESS,

IS THE PLEASANTEST WISH WHICH HIS SISTER CAN GIVE.

CLARA G. DOLLIVER.

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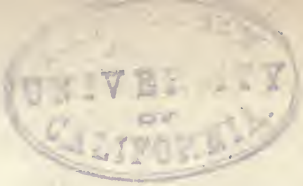

NO BABY IN THE HOUSE.

NO BABY IN THE HOUSE.

No BABY in the house, I know,—
'Tis far too nice and clean;
No toys by careless fingers strewn,
Upon the floors are seen.
No finger-marks are on the panes,
No scratches on the chairs,
No wooden men set up in rows,
Or marshaled off in pairs;
No little stockings to be darned,
All ragged at the toes,
No pile of mending to be done,
Made up of baby clothes;

No little troubles to be soothed,
No little hands to fold,
No grimy fingers to be washed,
No stories to be told;

No tender kisses to be given,
No nicknames, "Dove," and "Mouse;"
No merry frolic after tea,—
No baby in the house.

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THE BUNDLE OF TWIGS.

THERE was once a poor old woman who lived upon the border of a great forest called the King's Wood; this forest was full of deer and all kinds of wild game, and it was to this wood that the king came a hunting; with his gay clothes, his bright sword and spear, and his troop of gallant cavaliers and merry ladies.

Often and often had the old woman stood at the door of the hut, and seen them ride by; for she had lived in that place all of her life. When she was a child the gay party had thought her very fair, and had thrown silver to her from out their well-filled pockets; and she remembered well, how, when she was a lovely young maiden, the whole train had stood still before the

door, and she had given to the king a drink of water.

But she was an old woman now, and when they rode by on their fine horses, they did not deign to notice her, standing wistfully by the cottage-door.

True, they seldom came hunting now, and it was many a year since the old trees had echoed back the chime of horns and the ring of laughter; and many a year since the gentle deer had been chased down to the death, and stained the soft, green grass with their blood.

One winter morning, the old woman found that she had no wood to build her fire, and she was so cold, that she went out into the fair, snow-wreathed forest to gather bits of wood, so that she could build herself a fire and make herself warm.

Now, it was against the king's laws for any peasant to break the boughs, or in

any way to touch the trees, but they were allowed to pick up what wood was blown to the ground by the wind.

The snow was on the ground that winter morning, and, as the old woman bent and scraped it away with her feeble fingers, her hands and feet became chilled by the cold, and she gloomily thought of her hard life, and grumbled because the king compelled her to pick her wood from the ground, instead of the trees; then she grumbled because God had given to the king a fine palace, and warm food and clothes, and broad lands, while she, after a long life of labor, had to go out into the frosty air, and pick her chips to keep her from freezing, in her old age.

And the more she muttered of her hard fate, the more she felt like muttering; and at last she said, that, since God had found her to be of no use, and had never meant

her to be any thing but a toiling earth-worm, why did He give her life at all? and why had He not cut her down, and made room for the useful of the race?

Then, with an angry heart, she reached up her hand, and broke off a tiny twig from a brown bough.

She knew well that it was against the law, but it was very easy to break off a little twig; so she walked along, breaking off only the crooked ones, until she had quite a large bundle of them. Then she sat down under a tall tree to rest; and muttered all the time of her weary, unlovely life.

Suddenly there appeared before her a young, fair-faced man. When she saw him, she tried to hide the twigs under her apron, but he pulled it aside with a smile, and then asked her gravely:

"Why hast thou broken the twigs from

the king's trees, when he has forbidden it?"

"I broke not many!" replied the old woman.

"Ay!" said he, "but the law does not say, 'Thou shalt break not many.'"

"The snow was bitter cold," mumbled she, "and my fingers are old and feeble!"

"Ay!" said the young man, "but the law does not say, 'The young shall not break branches from the king's trees!'"

Then the old woman hung her head low; for, in all the time she had lived in the forest, she had never offended before, and she felt deeply abashed.

"I pray the king may forgive me!" she cried, "but my heart was bitter, and the cold struck deep; I thought that I was but a dead branch upon the tree of life, and why did not the Father lop me off? Then I saw a dead, crooked twig upon the fair

tree, and I plucked it with anger, and then, as I walked along, I saw many twigs which were crooked and dead like me, and I broke them all off; but I repent, and I pray the king may forgive me!"

"I will see that thou art forgiven," said he; "but what dost thou say of being a dead and useless branch, even as a dead, crooked twig? Thou art wrong there! thou art wrong there!

"Wilt thou give to me two of the twigs?"

The old woman looked at him, surprised, but gave him the twigs as he wished;—two very brown and crooked twigs.

He stooped, and scraped away the snow with his hand, and dug two little holes, put a twig in each one of them, and covered them up again with the snow.

"Next autumn," he said, "the new king comes hunting to this forest; I belong to

his court, and shall come too. Dost thou know what tree this is?"

"Ay! I have played, walked, and rested under its shade for many a year; it is the King's Oak!"

"Yes," said he, "the King's Oak! Next autumn, on the day before the grand hunting, wilt thou come, at sunset, to this spot?"

"Yes! yes!" said the old woman, "I will come."

"Make thyself warm with the twigs," said he, "and do not forget! Farewell!"

The old woman hobbled home to her hut; and, when she had built a blazing fire of the twigs, and had warmed her shivering skin, her heart warmed too, and melted away that crust of ice around it, which is called discontent.

She remembered how many troubles and vexations and dangers surrounded

the king, from which she was exempt; and she repented her ingratitude to the dear Father, who had given her so many fair gifts, with so few burdens and crosses.

The snow melted from the ground, the flowers bloomed and died, the grain was sown, and ripened, and being gathered, when the merry young king came to hunt in the forest.

One afternoon, the old woman stood in the door of her hut, breathing the incense-laden air that was wafted to her door from the grain-fields, when a wood-cutter passing by saluted her, and cried out:—

"Watch well to-morrow, old dame, for the gay young king will pass thy door."

"Is to-morrow the day of the grand hunting?" she cried.

"Ay! that it is," he returned, as he strode away into the rustles and shadows of the great wood.

"I had forgotten!" muttered the old woman, as she seized her crutch; "but there is yet time! a good hour yet before sunset."

She hurried as well as she could, for it was a long walk, to the King's Oak, and her limbs were getting stiffer and feebler every day; and it was well she did hasten, for when she reached the spot the sun had lit his flaming torch in the West, as though for light to go to bed by, and the fair-haired young stranger was already there, waiting.

He came toward her, and greeted her kindly, saying:—

"I feared thou wouldst forget, good dame, or else would fear to come."

"Ay!" she answered, "I come near forgetting; but afraid I was not."

"Dost thou remember the two poor, dead, crooked twigs which I buried in the ground and covered up with snow?"

"I remember them well," she replied.

"Good dame," said he, "thou didst not know that those two twigs, dead as they looked, and crooked as they were, had each within them a germ of *life*, true, bounding, earnest *life*, and that, left upon the tree, each of them, as well as every one thou hadst broken off, would have put forth vigorously the broad green leaves which make the King's Wood beautiful.

"And those two poor bits that I buried; —come here!"

And he showed her two little oak trees, tiny yet, but strong and vigorous.

"These," he added, "have put forth that germ of life which was within them, and may, sometime, be as stately and venerable as this oak under which we stand.

"Good dame, I remember that you likened yourself to a crooked and dead twig upon the tree of life; and I would fain

have you understand that as those had, underneath a poor exterior, a germ of life, so you have within you a germ of life; with this difference, the life within those crooked twigs was a poor and perishable one; whilst that within you is glorious and undying."

"Master," said the old dame, in a low voice, "whoever thou art, thou speakest the words of truth, and humbly from my old heart do I thank you."

"Say no more!" said the young man, "but pardon my preaching!

"And now I must hasten away. Farewell!"

The next day, as the old woman saw the gay company go by her but, she espied the young man with fair hair who had talked with her, riding upon a dashing white steed, in a gay hunting jacket, and with long snow-white plumes waving over his

cap; and when he saw her he smiled kindly upon her.

The next day a serving-man from the castle brought to the old woman a handsome knit-purse full of silver pieces; and the serving man said that his master bade him say, "that the preacher sent it to her."

"And what is thy master's name?" said the old dame.

"Dost not thou know?" said the serving-man, laughing loudly at her. "His name is Henry, and he is called by some, the King."

"What!" cried the old woman, "did he ride yester-morn on a fair, white horse, at the head of all the train?"

"That he did, of a certainty!" answered the man.

"Heaven help me!" she muttered, "and I a-talking to him so free."

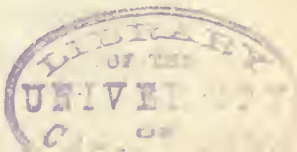
When the next winter came she looked

almost lovingly upon the brown bare boughs, and the wood-cutters laughed to themselves when they heard her mutter,—

"There's a germ of life in every one! in every one!"

They did not understand it, at all.

But she did.



OVER MY TEA-CUP.

I WAS alone; so I made for myself a cup of tea, and, after creaming and sugaring it to my taste, sat down to enjoy it.

In fact, I had finished the first cup, and commenced the second, when I leaned back in my cosy rocking-chair, took a little comfort quietly for a little while, and straightened up again for another sip, when I beheld, seated upon the edge of the cup, a small, dark creature, whose almond-eyes, long queue, and general celestial appearance, proclaimed him to be a native of the Flowery Land, otherwise known as China.

As I gazed in utter astonishment upon this remarkable individual, with my eyes and mouth gaping open, he made a polite

bow, smiled graciously, and made the original remark,—

"Pleasant evening, Miss."

Now, had I possessed the usual command over my tongue, I should certainly have informed my most charming, but unexpected visitor, that it was raining then, and it would probably continue to rain all night; but, as I could not collect my ideas very rapidly, I simply continued staring at him, without uttering a syllable.

Probably thinking that I was waiting for ceremony, my little friend introduced himself:—

"I am the King of Tea."

"The King," I ejaculated, in broken accents, "the King of—of—*Tea?*"

He bowed, smilingly. "Yes," he said, "you are quite right—of Tea."

"King!" said I, under my breath.

"Tea is very nice," he said, with the air

of one communicating valuable information, "and, ah! ahem! it comes from China—Celestial China."

"Perhaps—" faltered I.

"Oh! certainly, certainly, with unmitigated pleasure—I will tell you all about it—all that you can wish, Miss—all that you can wish."

I was going to beg of him to keep his feet out of my tea, where he kept splashing them all the time, but he was in such a hurry to answer, that he would not give me time to correct him.

"The Tea plant," he began, pompously, "is of the same family of plants as the Camellia, and came, originally, from China—Celestial China!"

"But—" I interrupted—for I *did* want to save my cup of tea, which was really excellent—

"Oh, nonsense!" said he, quickly, "that

story of the Japanese, about our getting it originally from them,—that is a base falsehood. It was first found in the central provinces of China—Celestial China."

"I beg your pardon," said I, "but you are—"

"Digressing? I know it," he said.

I had hoped that here was a chance for me to get in my entreaty, but no, he would *not* listen.

"The plant is bushy," he continued, "and grows to be about four feet high, bearing white flowers."

"Ugh!" I ejaculated, for just then he rubbed his feet together, and splashed them, as though he was bathing.

"Oh, no, indeed! not at all—not at all," he said, politely; "I am never tired. Let me see; I was telling you how those Arabian travelers, who ran through our land some ten or eleven hundred years ago,

praised up TEA. But what they said is counted as nothing, when we read the works of the great and illustrious Lo Yu, one of *our* writers, who flourished a few hundred years before them, and who paid a tribute to the virtue of tea, which will render his name immortal as long as the Chinese language is spoken."

"Was it introduced into Europe for washing?" I asked, intending to be ironical.

"What!" said the king—"introduced into Europe by Washington? No, no, Miss! it was introduced by the Portuguese, in 1520. They declared it would cure all diseases, and so it will—almost."

"May I ask," said I, giving up that cup of tea as hopeless, and quite ashamed to make any further fuss about it,—"may I ask whose method we use in preparing our tea?"

"Preparing our tea? Our neighbors, the Japanese, pound their tea into a powder," was the not very satisfactory reply of my little friend, "while the Persians boil it until it is very black."

"And we?" I inquired.

"You?" he answered—"why! you use a great deal of tea—really, quite a fine amount. England, too, does very well. I remember the time, only two or three hundred years ago, when fifteen hundred pounds was enough to glut the market. But they're improving—they're improving!"

"So the Persians boil it until it is black?" said I, trying to lead him back to his remark about methods of preparing the drink.

"Black?" said the King of Tea—"black, really, has a better effect upon the nervous system than green. To tell you the honest

truth, green tea is very much adulterated; besides, it is dried on copper platters, so it may have a good color, and so its effect on the nerves is bad—very bad. Tea is very much fixed up before it gets to you, anyhow. There is one kind, which we, ourselves, call Lie Tea, because it is made of tea-dust, stuck together with starch."

Here my little friend grinned broadly at the way they cheated the innocent and honest tea-drinkers.

"We have another way, too," he continued, "of making our valuable export pay us well. We pick up leaves which have been boiled once, dry them carefully, mix a little fresh tea with them, and, lo! our big pockets fill with gold."

"I should think," said I, "that the tasters would detect the cheat."

"So they do, so they do!" returned the King, "but the tasters die off rapidly—luck-

ily for us. Paralysis and head-ache attack them, and we fear them but little, very little."

Here he kicked up his heels so, that the tea splashed right over the edge of the cup.

"Pshaw!" said I, out of patience, "how long will this last?"

"Last!" said he, very graciously, "oh! the tea-plant usually lasts from ten to twelve years; we get four crops a year, too, so that is very well. There are two kinds of plants—hill and garden plants."

"Which are the best?" I edged in.

"The very best tea in the world we keep for ourselves," he answered, "but the best kind you ever get is the Pearl or Gunpowder tea. Oolong and Souchong are good, though! yes, excellent, in fact. The very meanest kind is *Twankay*."

"This," said he, smelling of my nice cup,

which he had spoiled by his ugly little feet,—"This is mere *Twankay!*"

With that he wisely slipped off from the cup, and disappeared.

"*Twankay!*" said I, indignantly, "I *know* that this is the very best Bohea."

But then, I was only dreaming.

THE DOCTOR'S FROG.

Never mind his name; everybody called him "The Doctor," and nobody knew if he had any other name or not, and, moreover, nobody cared; at least little Bo-peep didn't, and she was the most important member of his family, next to the Frog.

Frogs, as a general thing, are uninteresting creatures; they croak in the evenings, and we let them; but apart from their croaking, we, ourselves, care nothing about them; to be sure Monsieur says that they are excellent eating, and taste for all the world like chicken, but that, compliment though it may be, can not make them interesting as individuals.

But the Doctor's Frog was an exception;

the Doctor's Frog was an honor and an ornament to his class, and the Doctor was proud of him.

My Frog, sir!" he used to say, with a magnificent little flourish; and then the gentleman or lady would edge up, and look, and edge off again; for people, as a general thing, do not like to see frogs disporting themselves in the parlors of their friends.

The Doctor was old, but he was the youngest kind of a baby compared with the Frog; then, the dear old Doctor had wrinkles on his forehead, and many more white hairs in his dear old head than black; he stooped now, too, and his voice had a crack in it somewhere; but his Frog, though he was as old as the Flood, was as gay and lively as the youngest croaker about.

Don't laugh now, because I say as old

as the Flood, for I mean it; you have heard, perhaps, about frogs being found in great blocks of marble in which there was no crack nor fissure by means of which they might have got in; when the stone is broken, and the fresh air revives the prisoner inside, he stretches just one leg, and then the other, and, with one gushing croak of joy, hops off after a drink of water.

This is the history of the Doctor's Frog up to the time my part of the story commences.

So, it can be said with truth, you see, that the Frog was as old as the Flood; for he must have jumped into the stone when it was soft, in order to be there at all; and it was soft, probably, on or about the time of the Flood.

Any way, the stone which had held him so closely for so long a time, was broken

at last, and the Frog rolled out; the Doctor chanced to be there, so picking it up with his thumb and finger by one leg,—for he hated them as a class,—he vowed that this Frog should be his; and as nobody else wanted it, it became his.

The Doctor, therefore, had two pets now; for he had one before,—Little Bo-peep.

The way this little lady came to be the Doctor's pet, was this; it was a February morning,—a morning just dropped out of Heaven, it seemed, so beautiful was it! for the Doctor, you must know, lived in San Francisco, and in San Francisco there is no snow, no slush, no cold in February; nothing but sweet air, sunny skies, and green, springing life, with occasional showers to keep us from being too happy; and this particular February morning was the very balmiest and most lovely morning imaginable.

The Doctor,—I am sorry to record this of him, but the truth *must* come out, sooner or later,—the Doctor was not a lark in any respect whatever; larks, as I understand them, are distinguished by two things,—a great talent for singing, and an uncomfortable habit of getting up very early in the morning. Now the dear Doctor *could* whistle "Yankee Doodle," but he *could not* get up in the morning; at least, he always said he could not, but I have my doubts, whether he ever tried. Well, on this February morning, he was slumbering the balmy hours away, and was dreaming, perhaps, of his many patients who could not sleep at all, when something woke him up; this something was a little baby-voice singing the sweetest kind of a little baby song.

At first, it mingled with the Doctor's dreams; then he became conscious that there was a sweet reality about it somehow,

and, by a violent effort, he opened his eyes; he looked all around the room, but he could see no baby; he listened, and still he heard the singing, so he looked around again, and pinched himself to see if he was dreaming; he pinched a little harder than was necessary, and that convinced him that he was not dreaming, but still he could not see the baby, although he still could hear the singing.

"Well," exclaimed he, too lazy to get up, "I guess I'll wait, and see if the mystery won't explain itself."

So it did pretty soon; one of the long French windows in the Doctor's room was open; and pretty soon the singing grew nearer and nearer, until the little singer herself came up and "peeked in" at the window; the Doctor saw her, and he was excited instantly.

"Halloo! little Bo-peep,!" he cried out.

His voice was rough and deep, but children could always hear the heart which was ringing and sounding through its gruffness; and the little singer heard it too, for she trotted in, and stood there in the middle of the room, just as pretty as a picture.

She was two years old, perhaps, and babies of two years are always pretty and sweet; except when they are sick, and Bo-peep wasn't sick. She didn't have any thing on but her nightgown and one little sock; her hair was in the delightfulest curly tangle possible, and her blue eyes were wide open; her two plump arms were as pink as a sea-shell, and the dimples in them, and in her cheeks, were as deep as could be. Talk about pictures—the Doctor never had seen a picture in his life half so lovely as this living one which stood before him on that balmy February morning.

"Where did she come from?" he thought to himself; "somebody will put it in the papers to-morrow—'Lost, a little singing angel in a nightgown and one sock.'"

They made friends right away. The Doctor called her "little Bo-peep," and she liked the name; he wrapped her up, and put her on the bed; then he hunted for something to give her to play with, and could find nothing but a candy cat, which had been given to him by one of his admiring little patients, and a great medicine book, full of ugly pictures of skeletons, and of eyes without any faces, and faces without any eyes.

But Bo-peep liked it; she liked it so much in fact, that she tore out one leaf which had a very large skeleton on it; and the Doctor, for all he couldn't buy another one in all California, kissed her, and said, "Bless her heart!"

She ate up the candy-cat, and insisted so upon the Doctor's swallowing one leg, that he was obliged to do so, although he detested candy, and knew it would make his teeth ache.

By and by a ring came at the door-bell, and a lady, looking very much frightened and distressed, wanted to know if he had seen any thing of a little child; a lady across the street had told her that a child had gone into the Doctor's garden that morning, and she wanted to know if it was her child. "Yes, ma'am, I suppose it is," said he, regretfully, and then he showed her Bo-peep, with her little unsocked foot sticking out from the Doctor's wrappings, and her dear deep dimples filled up to the brim with candy.

And then her mother, between laughing and crying, told the Doctor how she had left her sound asleep, and gone to the mar-

ket; and how she came back and found her dearie gone; and then the dear old fellow questioned her, and found out that she was very, very poor; that her husband was dead, and that Bo-peep was the last one of a flock of little ones who had surrounded her hearth; the more he talked with her, the more he liked her, and the upshot of it was, that she brought her scanty possessions to his house the next day, and entered upon her duties as his housekeeper.

"What is this little midget's name?" he inquired that first evening, as Mrs. Burnett rocked the baby to sleep, by the kitchen fire.

"Well," she replied, "she hasn't any name, really; I have always called her baby, but I *did* think of having her baptized Hannah, after my sister, but I never have attended to it."

"I will give you any amount you may

name, that is, any amount in reason—to let me name her, and have her baptized," said the Doctor, beating one fore-finger upon the other.

Of course, Mrs. Burnett said, "name her by all means," and laughed at the idea of his paying her for it. So she was baptized a day or two afterward, and her legal name, then, was Bo-peep Burnett.

"Well," said Mrs. Straightback, "if that *ain't* the most barbarous and on-Christian-like name I ever heered!" But the Doctor, the mother, and the baby were satisfied. So I don't know that Mrs. Straightback's protest affected anybody.

Bo-peep loved the Doctor, and every thing which belonged to the Doctor, up to the time that the Frog came on the stage, but the Frog she did not like a bit.

The Doctor kept the Frog in the back yard, except when he wanted to display

it to visitors, when he took him into the parlor. Well, early in the morning, Bo-peep would roll out of her crib, grab both of her shoes, and standing on the very tip of her rosy little toes, she would lean out of her window, which was usually open, and throw both shoes out at poor Mr. Frog with all her baby might.

In vain the Doctor tried to frown, in vain Mrs. Burnett scolded; still, she persevered, to the great damage of her shoes, if not of the Frog. At last, Mrs. Burnett declared that she would whip her—whip little Bo-peep, who had hardly ever been scolded in her life, much less whipped; so little did she know of it, in fact, that she thought her mother was playing with her, and so laughed and chuckled, until her mother could no longer make believe whip, but had to hug her, and chuckle too.

Then she did, what she might as well

have done in the first place; she put the window down, and locked it.

But the angry feelings which existed on Bo-peep's part toward the Frog did not cease, by any means; the Frog bore no malice, I am sure, but it would have taken a nature really angelic to have forgiven wholly the treatment which he received from her.

One night it rained hard, and the next morning the Frog was gone. Bo-peep made no secret of her delight, and had not the least sympathy for the regret of the Doctor. There was a vacant lot next door to the Doctor's house, and, it being a little lower than the land about, whenever it rained, there would be a little pond in it; down to this pond little Bo-peep wandered the day after the Frog disappeared.

As she played and sung by herself, she saw suddenly her old enemy placidly sun-

ning himself among the grass and weeds; she had no pity on him, or on the Doctor, but, seizing a thick stick, she began pelting him so industriously and vigorously, that he was glad to get away without broken bones.

The next night the Doctor heard him croak; and such croaks! they could be heard, I am sure, at least two blocks away. The day after, the Doctor hunted for his Frog, but in vain—he never saw him nor heard him again; that loud, sonorous croaking was his parting serenade.

No one ever knew whither he had gone, nor why; but one of the Doctor's scientific friends suggested that he had become disgusted with this age of the world, and had jumped into another soft stone, for another thousand years' sleep.

Perhaps it was so; but little Bo-peep knew why he had become disgusted so

soon, for she knew all about how his peaceful mid-day nap was disturbed with a big stick; but the dear old Doctor never knew.

TALKING TO HIMSELF.

He was a child of dreams,—their boy;
His soft hair, shaded brown,
The summer suns had never scorched,
Nor round cheeks' baby down.
His play-room was his little world,—
His toys—his worldly pelf;
And as for playmates, why, the child
Talked all day to himself.

No stranger would have dreamed there was
A child in all the house;
For not a sound was heard from him.
He was a very mouse,
So small, so slender, lithe, and still;
A sober little elf,
They said;—a precious, darling child,
Who played all by himself.

Quiet now is the great grim house;
'T was always quiet before;—
His little toys are piled with care
Upon the play-room floor;—
But he never strewed them all about,
As most of children do;—
For, oh! 't was not *alone* he played,—
Angels were playing too.

Now do we listen for the voice,
That we can hear no more;
For murmurs low, and whispers sweet,
In passing his play-room door,
Oh when they told me all they did,
They said what was not true;—
He was not talking to himself,
'Twas angels he was talking to.

Tears,—most sad and tender tears,
Blind now our brimming eyes;
Such as are wrung from fond, fond hearts,
When the household baby dies.

And angels, ye who talked with him,
  And pleaded him to go,
Ye did not,—ah! ye could not know
  That we did love him so.

A white sweet face, a cold, cold form;—
  Hands folded on the breast,
As though the tender dove of Peace
  Had nestled there to rest;—
And this is all now left to us,
  This tiny thing like snow!
Oh, had we thought,—if we had known—
  But, ah! we did not know.

JOHNNY CHECKUP.

The rain fell on the roof outside with a gentle dipple, dipple, and Johnny Checkup fell on the floor inside with a great "bohoo, bohoo."

He did not hurt himself in the least, but when a little fellow is in the habit of getting lumps of white sugar for a little, tiny cut, and five cents for black-and-blue spots, and a big piece of pound-cake is his price for extracting splinters, he is apt to cry out "bohoo, bohoo!" when he tumbles down on his mother's soft Brussels carpets.

"Poor, poor little Johnny!" said sympathizing Miss Bella, putting down her worsted work, "come here! dear love, come to sister Bella, come!" Johnny put his hand up over his eyes, pretending to rub

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away tears which were never there, and still whimpering, came up and put his chubby cheek on sister Bella's shoulder. He tried hard to squeeze two tears into his eyes, but somehow, although, when he did not want to cry, he had tears enough and to spare, now, just when he wanted to cry, those tears just stayed behind the lids, and laughed at him, may be.

If Bella noticed it, she did not seem to mind it, but just put her arm around his shoulder, kissed the other cheek, and said, "Poor Johnny!"

"Bella," said he, "tell me a story."

Bella looked at her worsted work; it was coming Christmas, and those slippers must be finished for Papa Checkup, for Santa Claus does not bring grown-up folks presents, as we poor grown-up folks know to our cost.

She took them up.

"Johnny, I must work on papa's slippers this evening, for in—let me see—yes, in two weeks from to-morrow, Christmas comes. You would not like to have poor papa lose his present, just for your story; would you, now?"

Johnny looked thoughtfully at the bright worsted; he *did not* want to be "mean and stingy," but he *did* want a story, and sister Bella could tell such nice stories. A bright thought struck him.

"Why, Bella! why can't you work and talk too? You might tell me a story, and be working on papa's present all the time."

"No," said Bella, shaking her head, "I could not do that."

"Why?" said he; "I think you might. You don't push your needle through with your tongue, do you?"

"No," she answered, smiling, "I don't

do that, but, if I talk to you, I shall forget to count the stitches; and then, may be, poor sister would have to take out a lot of her work—it would be all wrong."

"No, you wouldn't neither;" and he began to whimper again as he said this.

"I just think you're real mean, Bella Checkup. I don't like you a bit, any more—not a single bit." And he whimpered louder.

"How can you be so naughty, Johnny? Sister tells you so many nice stories, and takes you out to walk, and does so many things for you, and now you don't love her. Very well, Master Johnny, very well."

Johnny kept up his whimpering.

"I shall tell Santa Claus about you," continued Bella, "when he comes whisking down the chimney, with his big fur cloak, and his funny red hat, and his great

big bag of lovely toys. He'll poke his funny red hat out first, and peer all around, to see if there are any little boys or girls in the room; and if he doesn't see any, he will say, in a loud whisper, 'Miss Bella, Miss Bella, has Johnny been a good boy this year?'"

"And what'll you tell him?" asked Johnny, with big eyes.

"Perhaps," said his sister, "*perhaps*— I shall tell him you have been a bad boy."

"All right for *you*, Miss!" howled he,— "all right for you, if you do! I shall just sit up, and tell him it's no such thing."

"But he will not come down, if you sit up," she answered.

"I'll get behind the sofa, then, so he can't see me," was the reply.

"Oh! but he will peer around, and see you there, and then he will whisk up the chimney again, and skip down Eddy

Harper's, without leaving any thing for you."

"Why?" said Johnny, "why will he?"

"I don't know why," said Bella, "only I know he won't come down if he sees any children in the room at all. He hugs his bags of presents tight to keep from dropping any, and up he runs."

"May be he's bashful," suggested Johnny.

"May be," answered Bella.

Pretty soon the little rascal nestled up to busy Miss Bella, and pressed a pair of soft cherry lips to her neck, saying, "I do love you a million dollars. I won't never be bad no more; let's be good friends, Bella."

The kiss was so sweet, the repentance so sincere, that Bella's heart smote her. And so she put down her work, put both arms around the dear sinner, and hugged him until he fairly squealed.

"Now, let's have a little chat about Santa Claus," he coaxed.

She looked at the slipper with a sigh. A thought struck her.

"When I have worked this row out to the end, I will. Now, go and play *very* quietly, and I'll call you when I am ready."

You could have heard a pin drop in that room for about a minute; then a subdued inquiry came from the corner:—

"Is it most done now?" Then a shake of the head followed, and another minute of silence; then,—

"Say, Bella, how many stitches more?"

"About a dozen, I guess," was the cheery answer.

In another minute, down went the slipper, and up came Johnny Checkup, on Miss Bella's knee.

"What will Santa Claus say, when he

sticks his head out?" said the young gentleman, eagerly.

"He 'll say: 'Miss Bella, Miss Bella! has Johnny been a good boy this year?' Then I 'll say,—

"'Oh, yes! Santa Claus, he 's been such a good boy!' Then Santa Claus will say,—

"'Well! here 's a good many toys for a little boy by that name, who has been very good.'

"Then he 'll pull out his beautiful candies, and nuts, and lovely toys, and he and I will stuff your stocking full. Then he 'll say,—

"'Well, Miss Bella, good-bye! Got a lot of chimneys to go down yet, else I'd stop longer.

"'Quite a relief it is to come down your chimney, 'cause it 's so nice and broad, and got an open grate.

"'Some are narrow—horribly narrow—

cloak's nearly ruined squeezing 'em; then they have a stove, and forget to put the damper down for me. Very bad thing Miss Bella, very bad thing.

"'Good-bye, now, good-bye!'

"And with that," continued Bella, "he will pull off his funny red cap, clap it on again with a jerk, and go flying up the chimney so fast that the soot will not have time to stir."

Johnny laughed!

"What will he bring for bad boys, this Christmas?" he asked, anxiously.

"Oh!" answered Bella, "I guess he brings old cracked cups, and burnt candy, and bitter nuts."

"Oh, yes!" said Johnny, "and busted whistles, may be, and wormy raisins and broken kites."

Then, after a pause,—

"What do you think he will have for

me, Bella? I haven't been bad, you know.

"Well, I don't know," replied the sister, "what would you like?"

"I think I would just like a steam-engine, and a cat, and a fiddle—"

"And the cow jumping over the moon?" added Bella.

"No! pooh! no! and—, a—truly pop-gun, and *lots* of nuts and candy. *Mixed* candy 's very nice," he suggested.

"Is it possible that this is all?" inquired Bella, merrily.

"Yes—and something for Lizzie Sawyer," answered Johnny, gravely.

"Oh, no! no, indeed!" said the young lady.

"Lizzie will get something in her own stocking, but not in yours."

"Say, Bella!" he said, "won't you tell me a story now? I *know* you will, be-

cause you're the bestest girl, in this whole city. Ah, yes! please do! Now, won't you?"

"Well, I don't know, sir; what will you give me for a nice story?"

"Five kisses!" was the prompt reply.

"Well! very well! it is a bargain," said she; one—counted she, two,—three,—four,—make this a good big one,—five—and one to grow on."

Johnny Checkup was used to this putting on an extra, and bore it very calmly.

"What is the story about?" he asked, all attention.

"Let me see," she replied, "let me see,—I'll tell you about—

THE LITTLE BOY WHO CRIED FOR THE MOON.

"Once there was a little boy, whose name was Teddy.

"He was a boy who had his own way,

usually, much more than was good for him; he liked it though, all the same.

"When he wanted any thing, he cried for it, and he knew from experience, that to cry for it, was the way to get it.

"Once he went on a visit to his grandmother. She was delighted to have him come, and was so kind to him, that he could not help but be happy.

"One evening, as he was standing by the window, he caught sight of the moon, moving slowly along among the stars.

"And what do you think he did?

"He asked his grandmother to get it for him, and when she told him she would if she could, but that she *could* not, it was so very, *very* far away, then Master Teddy began to scream and bawl, spicing his screams with—'I *want* it! I *will* have it!! You just give it to me now!!!'"

"He must have been a little *noodle*,

any-how," interrupted Johnny contemptuously.

"Perhaps," continued Bella. "But his grandmother did not like to see him crying, so she said kindly, 'Don't cry, Teddy, and I will give you a nice piece of gingerbread.'

"But Teddy, who thought it was quite smart of him to cry for the moon, kept on crying; thinking perhaps, that by that means, he would get two pieces of gingerbread.

"After awhile, however, his grand-mother lost all patience, and became very angry.

"Then she took him by the hand, gave him a good scolding, and sent him off to bed without any supper, or any kind kisses."

"And it was just good for him," said Johnny.

"So," continued Miss Bella, "he got neither the moon, nor the gingerbread; and,

besides, was sent to bed an hour before bed-time.

"After he got to sleep, he dreamed of a great sea made of moons, and filled with islands made of great hunks of gingerbread."

"That's a bully story!" said Master Checkup, whose language was not always suited to the drawing-room. "Tell it again, Bella."

"Oh! dear me!" she said, "I can not, you scamp; oh! truly, I can't tell it over again."

"Aw!" said Johnny, "*do.* Do please, nice, sweet, beautiful Bella! I'll give you five more kisses, if you will; won't you? Now, Bella, say you will; yes—now."

Bella shook her head, saying, "No, sir," very firmly. "But," she added, "for *eight* and one over, I will tell you another story."

"All right, madam!" was the reply. "Here's one, four, two, five, eight!"

Oh! what counting," said Bella, squeezing him.

"Now begin," said he, eagerly.

"Well," said she, "this is a story about —let me see—well—about

SCAMPER.

"Once there was a boy, a dear, sweet duck of a boy, whose name was Ernie.

"His name in reality was Ernest, but everybody loved him so well, that they thought Ernest was too cold for their warm hearts, and so called him Ernie, for love.

"His father was a rich man, and so he bought his dear boy a pony, and after consulting with papa, mamma, all the aunts and uncles, and all his friends, big and little, Ernie decided to name Mr. Pony—Scamper.

"Scamper was a very good name for him, too, for he used to scamper, as often as he got a chance.

"Master Ernie learned to ride this Scamper, after awhile, and many merry times he had with him.

"But the boy's mother was always a little anxious when she saw them cantering out of the gate, and always her last words were:—

"'Now, love, do be careful!'

"He would always reply:—

"'Oh! yes, indeed mamma, I will be *very* careful,' and I suppose he did mean to be careful, but it is pretty hard sometimes for boys to remember; and once or twice, Master Ernie found himself riding very much faster than was prudent."

The door opened, and Mamma Checkup's face appeared; Mamma Checkup's voice was heard, saying:—

"Johnny, love, it is seven o'clock."

Johnny knew well enough that seven o'clock meant bedtime, and he was reluct-

antly sliding himself off Bella's lap, when that dear sister interceded.

"He wants to hear the rest of this little story, mamma; it's very short—"

"Well!" said she, "five minutes more, then;" and the round face of dear Mamma Checkup disappeared from the doorway.

"One day," continued Bella, "Ernie was racing down William Street as fast as Scamper could make his feet fly, without thinking at all of his dear mamma's entreaties to be careful.

"A boy who saw them coming, ran out into the middle of the street, throwing up his cap in the air, and crying out, 'Whoa!'

"And Scamper did 'Whoa!' but he did it altogether too quickly, for off went his poor little master, on to the hard paving-stones.

"He did not move or stir, and the boy who had unintentionally caused the mis-

chief, and all the people who came running up, thought he never would move or stir any more.

"Scamper thought so too, perhaps, for he went up, and looked at the little boy with *such* a piteous look, and put his nose against his cheek, as much as to say,—

"'Nay, nay, little master, don't give up so.'

"I think the pony would have cried if he could.

"But Ernie was only stunned and injured, —not dead.

"He was taken home very tenderly, and for many weeks he was very ill; which is not at all nice, you know, for then you have to take such bitter, bitter, medicine."

"Yes," said Johnny Checkup, "I know."

"When Ernie's papa came home, and was told how dreadfully his dear little boy was hurt, he declared that Scamper must be sold.

"Sold he certainly would have been, had not all the aunts and uncles interceded for him, for they knew how disappointed their little darling would be, when he was well, to find his Scamper gone.

"The very first day that he was carried down stairs in papa's strong arms, he put his mouth to his ear, and whispered :—

"'Take me to the stable, please.'

"Papa said never a word, but he walked straight to the stable, straight to Scamper's stall, where Scamper was eating his breakfast.

"The pony looked up from his breakfast when he heard footsteps, and as he saw Ernie, he neighed, in a short, quick way, his joy at seeing him.

"Then Ernie put his thin, weak arms around Scamper's neck, and hugged him, saying, very tenderly,—

"'It was n't your fault, dear, dear Scam-

per, not your fault at all. Myself was to blame, and nobody else.'

"Then Scamper neighed again cheerily, as much as to say,—

"'All right, dear little master, all right.'

"I do believe," said Bella, "that you have got a tear way down in your eye; but never mind, Ernie's papa had two in *his*, and after his boy got well, he gave Mr. Scamper a splendid silver-mounted bridle."

Just then the door opened, and Mamma Checkup's round face declared that the five minutes had expired; so Bella kissed Johnny a loving good night, and off he went to dream of Santa Claus, truly pop-guns, gingerbread, slippers, and ponies, in a wonderful and delightful confusion.

CHEE.

"MA," said little Miranda Gager, one morning, "may I stay at home to-day?"

"No, Miranda," said Mrs. Gager.

Then Miranda cried, and thought that her mother wasn't nice.

Very few little girls, perhaps, would have thought Mrs. Gager a very nice mother; for she was not a bit indulgent. She would not allow Miranda to chew gum nor eat candy; she would not allow her to stay at home, or be dismissed from school; she would not let her wear the gold watch Uncle Joe gave her, nor did she ever give her a birthday party.

On the other hand, very few mothers, indeed, would have thought that Miranda

was a nice little girl; for she would not study her lessons, and she would whisper; she boasted that her father was rich; and she could not keep her temper. Worse than all, she was always trying to plague Gussie and Chee.

"Miranda," said Mrs. Gager, sternly, "are you not ashamed of yourself? You are lucky in being able to go to school at all; think of Gussie, how glad he would be if he could go to school as you do."

"Oh, dear!" sobbed Miranda, "I wish I had been and broke both my legs, like Gussie, and get everybody to pity me, and be so good to me, as everybody is to him. I wish—"

"Miranda," said her mother, "you will go now to your own room, and remain there until school-time."

"I hain't had no breakfast!" howled Miranda.

"Your breakfast will be sent to you," answered her mother.

Then Miranda cried louder than ever, for she knew that she would have nothing but a bowl of bread and milk sent to her room, and she, like many other little girls, liked coffee and cakes much better.

As she went crying up stairs, she met Chee, bringing Gussie down in his arms.

Chee was the Chinese servant, whose sole duty was to take care of Gussie. He was a tall, brown-cheeked, almond-eyed, pig-tailed, blue-robed young fellow, strong as a giant, and as gentle as a child. He loved little Gussie, and Gussie loved him; but Miranda and Chee were sworn enemies.

"What's the matter, Ranny?" said sweet-voiced, patient Gussie.

Miranda told her story, and Gussie said, "Too bad, Ranny!" But he knew that her

story was not all the story, so he did not attempt to intercede for her. So Miranda breakfasted on bread and milk, and went to school at half-past eight.

Chee rolled Gussie in his carriage until the sun got up high in the heavens, and the winds began to rise; for, in San Francisco, it is delightful in the forenoon, and exceedingly windy, dusty, and unpleasant in the afternoon.

After he came home, Gussie took a nap, and while he was asleep, Mrs. Gager sent Chee on an errand; Chinese servants are well known to be exceedingly dishonest, but Chee had lived in the family a year, and Mrs. Gager fully trusted him.

"Here, Chee," she said, giving him twenty dollars in gold, "I want you to go, while Gussie is asleep, and get my cloak and dress for me from Mrs. Cumming's.

Just give her the money, and tell her I sent it; that 's all, and hurry back."

Chee went, but he did not hurry back; Gussie woke up, and inquired for him, waited patiently, and inquired again, waited and watched; but Chee, faithless Chee, did not return.

Mrs. Gager sent to the dressmaker's to see if he had been there at all, and found that he had, and that he had taken away the dresses, but said nothing about any money; the conclusion was inevitable, that Chee was a thief.

Everybody thought so but Gussie; in face of all the facts, he declared his faith in his old friend, and would not believe that Chee was any thing but a good, faithful, and honest, but unfortunate, Chinaman.

He persisted in this belief, after weeks had passed. Another servant was procured to take care of him, yet still he clung to the

memory of Chee, and declared that he would yet come back, and clear his clouded character.

Poor little patient, sweet-faced Gussie Gager was getting nearer every day to that city where all things are made clear, and he knew it; he knew long ago that he could not live to be a man; he knew that his tiny thin arms never could grow any stronger and that his poor useless little legs, never could do him any service, until he stood upon the other shore.

"Chee," he said one day to his attendant, "should you cry if you thought you must die now?"

"Yes, Chee ki," answered the Chinaman, whose English was defective.

"Do you know, Chee," said Gussie, "that I am going to die, and I do not feel sorry at all; I feel so glad, because I can not live."

"No, no," answered Chee, earnestly, "you no die, Gussie, you too pretty, too good. Missy Ranny die; she all bad; good die."

What Gussie said was true; he was glad that he could not live; for he was of so sweet and angelic a nature, that he felt no more fear of going to meet the angels across the river, than he did of crossing the street to meet his sister; his pure, heavenly, untainted spirit looked out from his large soft eyes, until you fancied the little crippled figure was but a shell, holding him down.

If he had been well-formed, healthy, and strong, he would have been like Miranda, perhaps, self-willed and pettish; but a boy who has no companionship but himself, and the angelic spirits which hover over good children, can not but become akin to them; and all who knew him, thought that little Gussie was an earth-angel.

One day, as his new attendant—his name

was Ah Foy—was wheeling him along the broad sidewalk, on Mission Street, he was startled by hearing Gussie call out, excitedly,—

"Stop a minute, Foy; there is Ah Chee! Chee, Chee, have you forgotten Gussie Gager?"

But the Chinaman to whom he spoke, hurried away as though he did not hear him, and Ah Foy said, "Him no Ah Chee."

"No," said Gussie, sadly, "I thought it was, but it was not."

He told Miranda about it when he got home, but she only laughed, and said,—

"I'll bet it was Chee, and he was afraid you would have him taken up for stealing."

But Gussie shook his head, and said,—

"No, Ranny, I don't think it was Chee, because he *knows* that I would not let him be taken up for any thing; and he loves

me too much not to stop and speak to me, even if he was afraid."

A week afterward, Chee came, and asked to see "Missy Gager." He told Mrs. Gager a story, which might, or might not, have been true. He said that he went for the dress and cloak, but forgot to pay the lady; that he then went to call upon a countryman, "a belly bad man," he said, who advised him not to go back, but to keep the money and the clothes, and buy a fan for Josh (their great idol), so that he would not be angry with him.

At first he struggled against evil, so Chee said, but, after a while, he yielded, and went to work for his friend, the bad man; but he did not spend the money, nor sell the dress, for his torpid Chinese conscience *would* stir occasionally, and trouble him.

At last, he saw Gussie on the street

(he was right then, when he thought he saw him).

He saw Gussie, and heard him call,—

"Chee! Chee! have you forgotten Gussie Gager?" And his heart was so touched, by the sad, sweet voice of his little charge, that he had come back with the money and the clothes, to ask Missy Gager to forgive him, and let him come back again to take care of Gussie; and, after a little consideration, Missy Gager said, "yes."

To say that Gussie was glad when he was told all this long story of Chee's, would be falling very much short of the truth; his little, pale face fairly beamed with joy; and he told Chee, that he was so glad and sorry both at once, that he didn't know which he was most.

He tried hard, dear little Gussie! to convince Chee that he had done something very wrong; but Chee, assuring him that

he had bought a fan for Josh out of his own pocket, would not be convinced that the theft was wrong in itself.

When the warm autumnal sun had given place to the clouds and rains of the California winter, Mrs. Gager told Chee, that at the end of the month he must find another place; and when Chee, with much surprise and distress, inquired why, she told him that the doctors said, that when little Gussie left his bed, it would be to seek a cold and dark one; and that the sunshine would never again fall upon and illuminate his face, for Gussie's God wanted him to come and live with Him, where the sunshine never faded.

Then Chee's heart ached, for all it was but the heart of a barbarian and an idolater. He asked Gussie that day, what he could do to please him; and Gussie put his little hand, so thin and so white, upon

the brown and hard one of his friend; and it fell upon Chee's so lightly, that it seemed more like the hand of an angel than a child.

"Chee," said Gussie, "you can do something, that will please me *so* much. It will please me while I live; and after I die, I will look down and love you from the heaven where I am going to live, if you will do it for me."

"Yes," said Chee, with a big tear in his almond eyes, "yes, Gussie, Chee will."

"Love Jesus," said Gussie, "love Jesus." But before he could explain who Jesus was, the Doctor came in, and said that he must not talk any more, so all Chee knew was that he must love Jesus; "but where can I find him," thought Chee, sadly; "I can't love him unless I can find him."

The next day (Gussie's last day on the earth, which had been like a prison to him)

was a dark, cloudy, and drizzly day; but toward sunset, the clouds broke away in the west, and let a flood of glorious sunshine into the sick chamber.

"Papa," said Gussie feebly, as the first breaking of the clouds lightened the room; "I'm getting nearer, papa; I can almost see the walls of God's city now; it is getting so light."

They bent over him more closely then; and a great scalding tear dropped from Mrs. Gager's cheek, upon the thin, cold hand of her crippled boy, her only son.

Gussie thought it was Miranda. "Ranny," he said, "don't cry."

The room grew lighter and lighter. "I'm getting nearer," he murmured, "nearer and nearer."

The clouds broke away then, and the whole glorious burst of sunshine beamed into the room; but more especially did it

fall upon the bed; upon the tiny figure, whose little crippled feet had never been stained with the stains of earth; upon the white face, always pure, now angelic.

"Mamma!" he cried joyfully, "the gates have opened, the gates have opened." His heart fluttered for a moment, and then, the gates did, indeed, open to him.

And poor Chee, who loved him, wondered where he could go to find the Jesus whom he was to love, in order to please Gussie; he asked, but nobody could touch the chord in his heart which had vibrated to the little cripple's touch, and so nobody could tell him to his satisfaction, who Jesus was, nor where he could find him.

At last, Chee bethought himself of the bed where his little friend was sleeping, and he thought that if this Jesus was a spirit, not a man, that he would hear him there, by the side of Gussie's grave. So

once a month Chee carries flowers—white flowers, for white is the mourning color to the Chinese, as black is to us—he carries these frail white blossoms, as many as he can get, and strews them over the mound; murmuring, as he does so, "I love Jesus, I love Jesus!"

Perhaps this simple and strange act of worship is acceptable to Him who holds worlds in the hollow of his hand, yet listens to the prayers of the meanest of his creatures; and, perhaps, when our final accounts are cast, Gussie will know, with a glad heart, that his short and crippled life did not fail to bear fruit.

Chee believes that his friend looks down from his home and smiles upon him, and the day that he pays this homage at his grave, is the happiest day of his miserable life, because he does believe so; and I believe it too.

THE TOY BALLOON.

I cried, "Hold fast, thou little hand!
'Twill slip away from you,
And be a toy for birdies gay
In the skies so bright and blue.

Against the clouds 'twill bumping go,
And sail from out your sight,
So now be cautious, little hand,
And hold that ribbon tight."

"Oh, I don't care!" those roguish eyes,
They fairly laughed at me,
"If it goes above the pearly clouds,
To where the angels be;

For you may bet," he did not heed,
My sternly warning frown,—

'Twould not be lost, of course 'twould
not,
For they would throw it down."

All ye who walk the way of life,
By bitter care defiled,
Ye know the word of Jesus saith,
That ye must have the simplest faith,
The faith of a little child.

THE BROWN NOSES.

The Brown Noses were house-hunting. Poor Mrs. Brown Nose, who was rather delicate, went into a fit of tears every night after supper, and once sobbed out to the head of the family,—

"Oh, Brown Nose, Brown Nose! I shall die of starvation if I stay here much longer, for I can not, I *can not* bear Mrs. Puggins' cooking."

Mr. Brown Nose looked disconsolate, and said:

"My dear, it is well and easy to say *move;* but just tell me, if you can, of some place to which we *can* move. I grant you that Mrs. Puggins' cooking is bad enough. I declare to you that her cheese is abomin-

able, and her bread miserable; but, Mrs. Brown Nose, is it not better to swallow this bread and this cheese of Mrs. Puggins' and *live*, than it is to wander out into the wide world, risking the chance of finding another home, and, perchance, *die?*"

Here he made a majestic sweep of his paw, making the flour fly in every direction, for, you must know, the Brown Noses lived in Mrs. Puggins' flour barrel.

"Ah, Greyback!" sobbed the poor lady, "'tis not alone the cookery of Mrs. Puggins that renders me miserable, but she comes poking around here, and, although I do my best to keep the children still while she is present, sometimes they will whisper or cry, and then that odious woman, who is *so* disagreeable, you know, screams out,—

"'Those nasty mice! Jehoshaphat Pug-

gins shall go this very day and get me a trap! The nasty things!'

"And then, dear Greyback, she dives her hateful great paw down into the house, and, of course, the poor children are dreadfully terrified, and naturally scream out a little, and then she goes and yells out,—

"'Those nasty mice!' and growls something more about the trap, until I am fairly wound up to the screaming point.

"Greyback Brown Nose, I tell you we *must* move, and, moreover, we *will* move, for our children's lives are in danger, as well as our own."

"Mrs. Brown Nose, you and I will go out this very evening, and try to find a new home; then, if we do, 'Farewell to Puggins!' as you yourself once said."

"Well said, Greyback!" was the reply. "There is no harm in trying, at least."

So, that evening, this charming couple

dressed themselves out in their best, washed their faces, and curled their whiskers, and started off.

Mr. Brown Nose thought there was no need of fixing up so much, but the lady said she would not go out of the house looking like a ragamuffin, and neither should he, "for," she said, "who knows but we might meet the Short-paws or the Big Eyes, and how mortified we should feel if we did not look respectable! You never catch the Short-paws out with uncurled whiskers and dirty faces, and they never shall catch me out so, for all they stick themselves up for big-bugs, and we don't."

"Very well," said he, "very well;" and he impatiently jerked a refractory whisker.

"Do you know, Greyback," said Mrs. Brown Nose, confidentially, "do you know that Mrs. Soft Ears, old Short-paws' mar-

ried daughter, you know, told me that those Big Eyes have got a mean place there at Madame Harkey's?"

"No, I don't," rejoined Mr. Greyback. "I'd like to know if you're ready!"

"My conscience, how cross you are!" she said, catching up her fly-wing fan. "I'm all ready; come along."

So, after admonishing the children to keep quiet, Greyback took Mrs. Brown Nose's ear in his mouth, which is the way mice are gallant, for you may imagine that it would be very inconvenient for the gentlemen mice to offer the ladies their arms.

The Brown Noses had a dreadful time house-hunting.

The places they were obliged to squeeze through, fairly made Mrs. B. quite sick; and besides that she lost her fly-wing fan; and besides that, in squeezing through a particularly tiny hole, Greyback jerked her

ear so, that it bled very badly, and quite spoiled her beautiful spider's-web collar, which she prized *so* much, because a former admirer had presented it to her.

Greyback, though, did not seem to care a bit when she told him of the damage he had done.

Then, crowning sorrow of all, after her fine things were spoiled, they met Mr. Big Eyes, who invited them in for a rest and refreshments.

For these mice, you must know, are the most hospitable race in the world, and never have a caller but they invite him to make free with Mrs. Puggins', or Madame Harkey's, or Mrs. Somebody else's provisions, apologizing all the time for the cooking, in the politest manner imaginable.

The Big Eyes seemed to have a very comfortable place, in spite of what Mrs. Soft Ears had said, and were so *very* sym-

pathizing, when poor Mrs. Brown Nose, with tears in her eyes, told them of her multitude of troubles, that Greyback opened his heart and his mouth at the same time, and told them what he was hunting for.

Then up spoke Bluey Big Eyes, the eldest daughter of that charming family.

"Oh ma! oh pa! oh Mrs. Brown Nose! I know something!"

"Yes, my dear, yes," replied her pa, looking a little dubious, for he did not consider Bluey very bright. "Yes, my dear, well?"

"Yes," returned Bluey, "I met Mrs. Soft Ears' son, Greeny, to-day, and he told me that the family had moved from their house to another. So, perhaps the Brown Noses may like their house."

"May be," said Mr. Big Eyes, with a nod.

"May be," said Mrs. Big Eyes, with a smile.

"May be," said Mr. and Mrs. Brown Nose in concert, Mr. B. twisting a long whisker round his claw, and Mrs. B. wiping away her tears on a paper handkerchief.

Mrs. B. knew where the Soft Ears had been residing, so, after mutual good wishes, they wended their way onward, inspected the premises, found them satisfactory, and returned to their innocent family, who had slumbered on peacefully in the warm recesses of Mrs. Jehoshaphat Puggins' flour-barrel, all the time their parents had been gone.

How great was Mrs. J. Puggins' joy when she discovered that "them pesky mice" had left her.

How great was Mrs. Ludovick's annoyance when she discovered that "those disgusting creatures" were not gone, although she had hoped they were, as she had neither seen nor heard them for several days.

"Dear, dear! What shall I do?" said Mrs. Ludovick one day as she heard a loud squealing in the provision-closet (a little family difference among the Brown Noses, by the by); "I must get a trap. Charles, when you come home to-night, bring me a trap!"

"Very well," said Charles, and came home, sure enough, with a cunning little trap in his pocket, attractive enough to beguile any but the most wary and experienced mice into its treacherous door. And when that same door was thrown invitingly open, and a most savory and inviting mouthful of cheese was suspended in front of it;—well, it would have overruled the scruples of very cautious mice, as, alas! it overruled the prudence of the Brown Noses.

Greyback Brown Nose, the father of the family, was the first to fall.

It was one night when there was no

dainty on the shelves, and as Greyback was peering disconsolately here and there, he saw the door of the little wire-house flung wide open, he scented the bit of cheese hanging in front of it; but alas! he never noticed that the wicked little wire held the door wide open.

So he walked in, and with gaping jaws, took the cheese into his mouth; bang! came the door, right down upon poor Greyback's tail, while at the same time, the sharp wire upon which the cheese was hung cut and lacerated his tender little mouth.

Oh! how he cried!

Oh! how he squealed!

Poor Mrs. Brown Nose rolled out of bed, and taking two of the dear children by the ear, she told the rest to follow, and scampered off to the scene of sorrow.

"Yew-ew!" squealed Greyback; "my tail is being pinched off!"

"Oh, Greyback! what has happened?" sobbed Mrs. B.

"There was cheese here," groaned he, "and a sharp wire, and—"

"Poor pa!" squealed all the children.

"My children!" said Greyback, "I am convinced that my last hours are approaching! Be warned by me, my children, and never yield to advice which your heart tells you is bad advice.

"And you, Mrs. Brown Nose, be warned by this sad occurrence, and try to be *contented!*

"I now feel that Mrs. Jehoshaphat Puggins was a fine woman; that her cheese was not abominable, neither was her bread miserable.

"Oh!" he groaned, "my mouth! my tail!"

Just then was heard the heavy thump! thump! which announced the coming of

Charles Ludovick; and Greyback had time only to gasp out.—

"My loved ones, I bid you farewell!" when the door opened, the loved ones scampered out of sight, and Mr. Charles Ludovick seized the trap and departed.

The last scion of the Brown Noses prowled about in the provision closet one Autumn night, sadly thinking of the promising family of brothers and sisters who had, one after another, been beguiled into the wire house, from which they had never escaped.

"I shall never be caught," he said to himself, as he wandered listlessly along, "for I am warned by the unhappy fate of every member of my family. I dread, I shun the very scent of cheese! Mrs. Ludovick has but very little upon these shelves, too, that is palatable. What! what is this I smell? I truly believe that it is bacon.

I can not see here, it is so dark! I wonder where this bacon can be?"

Here he brushed against something,—bang! went the little door, and the last member of the Brown Nose family was alone with the piece of bacon;—but he did not want it now.

How sad he was, and how soon it was morning! how cruel sounded Mr. Ludovick's voice when he called out,—

"Jane, I've got another mouse!"

How fast the poor little heart beat when that gentleman took the trap in his hand and looked in!

"I'll drown the scamp pretty soon," said Charles, putting the trap down on the wash-house bench.

By and by, up came a rosy, chubby face, and a pair of big brown eyes peered into the wire house; a pair of cherry lips saying,

"Poor Mr. Mousey! poor, little Mr. Mousey! you don't like to be in there do you? I'm sorry you got caught, Mr. Mousey, real sorry, and I'd like to let you go."

The little chubby hand fumbled at the door.

"I wonder if it's hard to move," said he.

No, it was easily moved, the kind heart was easily moved too, and,—well! up went the wire door, and out darted Mr. Brown Nose, glad indeed to get away.

"Oh! mamma, the little mouse has gone," called out the cherry lips, "I let him out!"

"Dickey!" was the grave answer, "that was not right, you know."

And this was all that was said.

Young Mr. Brown Nose lives with the Big Eyes' family now, but he never eats cheese or bacon.

"I CAN WAIT."

There was once a very beautiful lady, who lived in a very beautiful country, which was ruled by a glorious and beneficent King.

Now this King so loved his fair country, and so loved his dear subjects, that he showered upon it and them, all the gifts and blessings he could; he took such a warm interest and felt such tender love for each and all, of them, that he wished and endeavored to make all equally happy.

He could not do this, however, for some were so greedy that they wanted all of his kind gifts and blessings; others were so perverse that they chose to be unhappy when there was not the slightest reason;

while others were so wasteful and improvident, that they were always in need, despite his kind bounty.

But so dearly did he love them all, that he not only forgave them all of their faults, but every once in a while, sent to them a lot of beautiful presents by his messengers.

In the part of the country where this beautiful lady lived, there lived many other beautiful ladies, who thought themselves quite as fair as Lady Cecilia, and maybe they were too, only it does not seem so to me.

One day, the King's messenger came, bearing with him all the beautiful gifts which his master had sent to his dear people.

The old men and women, the fathers and mothers, the young men, the maidens, and even the little children, flocked around him and hung on to his garments, as he gave his presents to first one and then another.

All but the Lady Cecilia.

She was busy binding up the wounds of a pale and weary stranger, for she remembered that the King had bidden his subjects to be kind and charitable, one unto another; and she loved him so well, in return for his love of her, that she was anxious to do what he required of her.

The stranger had very many wounds, and the King's messenger had distributed his gifts and was on his way to the next village, when seeing her, he stopped and touched her arm, saying:—

"Fair maiden, choose quickly, for I must go."

But just then, Cecilia was pressing the lint on to a sore, deep, wound, and she replied gravely, but not sadly:

"Go thy way, messenger, for I can wait until the next time."

The messenger cast upon her a loving

and admiring look, and, as she desired, went on his way.

The next time he came, Cecilia chanced to be clothing and feeding a hungry and homeless little orphan child, who had wandered to her door, for she knew that the King dearly loved little children, and that, in his glorious palace and noble court, were crowds of dear young children, who had gone to live with him forever, because he loved them so very, very tenderly.

So she gave good, wholesome food to the half-starved little one, and replaced its poor rags with clean, whole, garments; but it took her a long time to do all this, and so the King's messenger paused before her door, and said:

"Cecilia, come and take the fair gift our King has sent thee."

She would have gone, but the child's

tender, weary arms were clasped tightly around her neck, so she turned her head toward the door, and said with a smile:

"I can wait, fair messenger;"

The King's messenger looked upon her with a deep, deep joy in his heart, which shone out through his eyes; but he said nothing, and went on his way.

For the third time the King's messenger came to the village where Cecilia lived. The people all crowded about him, as was their custom; and, waiting upon the edge of the road, with a smile upon her sweet lips, was the fair maiden Cecilia; not so young as once she was, nor so fair in the eyes of those about her, but wonderfully young and lovely in the eyes of that messenger from the King's court.

He gave to all, the presents sent to them, but, as he passed Cecilia, he said, very gravely:

"Maiden, I have no gift here for thee."

The smile quivered for an instant on those red lips, and the kind, blue eyes were blinded with tears, but the smile came back bravely, and she answered:

"I can wait, fair messenger."

Love and pity shone so in the look he gave her, that she minded not the questions, the wonderment, and the scorn of those about her, but comforted herself, as she went along, by saying over the words,

"I can wait! I can wait!"

Many, many times he came, but never did he bring gifts for Cecilia; and yet, through all disappointments, did she answer:

"Fair messenger, I can wait."

She *did* wait, patiently, for a long time, until the people of the village thought her old and ugly; yet the King's messenger thought her more beautiful every time he came.

Perhaps the village people judged her beauty by their standard alone, and, because her lips were no longer red as they were in youth, and her cheeks were no longer round; because her hair was gray and thin, and her forehead was beginning to show the wrinkles, they called Cecilia ugly. But the King's messenger did not notice these changes, for he looked at the *heart*, and he saw how that was beautiful with the gratitude and blessings of the unfortunate, and lovely with its own sweetness and purity, and how it grew more and more beautiful every year; so always, when he came, he said to her:

"*Fair* maiden," or, "*fair* Cecilia, I bring thee no gift."

And he marveled much, how those around could help seeing the loveliness shine out of her eyes when she answered, "I can wait!"

But, far from seeing any virtue in Cecilia's submission to the will of the King, they only wondered why it was that he sent to her no presents and most of them believed that she had committed some sin, for which she was now being punished.

So, from the scorn of one, came the scorn of others, until the poor maiden was, in spite of her goodness and charity, made the abhorrence of all in the village.

Yet she never murmured against the King, that he had put this burden upon her; sometimes, indeed, she grew weary and heavy hearted, but then she remembered how dearly he loved her, and she knew that he was trying her, to see if she was worthy of his great love and bounty; and she knew also, that, although he had sent her no gifts for so long a time, that in the end, she would have one so beautiful that all others would pale, and be as

nothing beside it; and when she thought of this she clasped her hands together, and murmured, "Ay, dear King and Master, I can wait! I can wait!"

Her patience was sorely tried, for the people grew to disliking her so much, that at last they drove her from the village, taking from her all that she had in the world, and forbidding her with harsh threats and cruel words, ever to return.

So, poor, old, sad-eyed Cecilia wrapped her thin mantle about her, and went out into the bitter storms, and wranglings and uncharity of the world.

But she was not so very much cast down about it, for she remembered that the King had bidden and entreated all the unfortunate, the weary, and the wretched, to seek him, that he might comfort them, and take them into his beautiful palace to live with him.

She knew not which way to turn to find him, but she determind to walk along on the road, and to ask every person she met if they could tell her the way to the King's house, until she found him.

The first person she saw was a shepherd lad, herding his master's sheep by the roadside, she hastened when she saw him, and said to him:

"Good child, canst thou tell me the way to the King's house?"

The boy lifted up his brown face to answer her, when she discovered that he was the very same little orphan to whom she had been so kind years ago, and who was now almost a man; he knew her too, and kissed her hand, reverently, saying,

"Art not thou Cecilia, who did give me food and clothes years ago, when I was ragged, and hungry?"

She smiled and answered:

"Ay! good child I am Cecilia; and now I am seeking the beautiful home of our dear King, for all others have turned against me."

And he answered her, very reverently:

"Fair Cecilia, I have thought but little of the King, and I have never sought the way to his home, but this I know, if you are not nearly there now, you are surely upon the right road."

And the shepherd lad without another word, turned to herd his sheep again, and Cecilia feebly plodded on her way.

The way was long and rugged, and her steps were so slow that night was beginning to fall when she neared a roadside cottage; she knocked at the door doubtfully and timidly two or three times without meeting with any response.

She knocked again, and waited, but nobody came, and she was about to give up

in despair, when a rough hand appeared upon the window-sill, and a hard, ill-favored face appeared in the window.

"Wilt thou tell me the way to the King's house?" said Cecilia, trembling, she knew not why.

"The King's house!" returned the ill-favored woman, with an air of suspicion, "I know not, truely! Travellers have stopped here to ask their way to all kinds of places, but thou art the very first who has ever asked the way to the King's house. They are well content to take his gifts, without troubling themselves further. And who are you, that you must ask the way to the King's house?"

"I am the poor old maiden, Cecilia!" answered she; "and I seek him, because he has bidden us to do so, when we are forsaken by all others, as I am."

"Begone!" cried the woman, harshly,

" begone ! if thou art indeed that miserable, wicked woman, begone from my door !"

With a heart beating fast, Cecilia obeyed the command ; and, wrapping her worn mantle more closely about her thin frame, she hurried away down the dark and rugged road.

The wind whistled mercilessly, as it went by, and seemed to hiss, " begone, begone !" Her heart became very heavy with sorrow, for the world was very hard to her, and the dear King was *so* hard to find.

" I *can* wait," she murmured in her broken voice, " but it is a weary thing to do, and I have waited so long, dear King, I have waited *so* long."

She slept upon the hard earth that night, and the next day she trudged along again, in that rugged way ; and for many nights and days she slept upon the hard

earth, and plodded along the hard earth patiently and trustingly.

But one night, there was a fearful storm. The wind hissed and howled, and muttered along the weary road; and the broad fields stretched away in their cold verdure, and the brown mountain sides glowered pitilessly down, upon the poor, worn, bent, wanderer, who, swayed to and fro by the blast, was trampling sadly onward; searching for the home of that dear friend, who, of all others, never would desert her.

She bent her head low, so that the rain could not beat in her face, and held out before her, her two hands, as if she would feel her way through the dense darkness; but she was chilled to the bone with the cold and rain, and faint with fasting; she tottered from the one side of the road to the other, as the wind hurled her; she knew not how far the house of the King

might be, nor knew if she was even on the right road; no marvel that her courage failed her.

Vainly did she endeavor to keep up her spirits and courage, by saying to herself, "I can wait, dear King and Lord, I can wait!"

She remembered the many cruel and bitter trials which she had borne, without a sigh for his sake; she remembered the many times that she had obeyed his wishes, where all about her disregarded them; and how they had received favors and gifts from his hand year after year, while for her there came no gift.

The big tears rolled down her withered cheeks, and stung them sharper than the driving rain. Her feet slipped upon the wet earth, and her thin mantle was fast being blown into tatters; but her heart ached so bitterly, that she hardly noticed this.

"My King, my brethren, all have deserted me!" she cried aloud, "they have all, all forsaken me!" And the blast of wind as it swept by, seemed to echo, "all! all! all!"

Her weary feet slipped upon the ground, and she fell, cutting her hands so that they bled, but she scrambled up again and tramped on; the air grew heavy about her, and she tottered as she went, like an unsteady wall.

Her salt tears mingled with the rain, and her hands were covered with blood; the heavy air became thicker and heavier, her feet slipped, and again she fell upon the earth.

But she did not rise again this time, but cried out, "dear King, thou lovest me, I know, and I can wait no longer, I can wait no longer!"

For a moment the rain poured on, the

wind howled by, the bleeding hands quivered and ached; then Cecilia found herself in front of a great pearl gate, which stood half-way open; and down a golden path came a beautiful being, whom she knew as the King's messenger.

"I knew thou wouldst come," cried he; "I knew, long since, that thou wouldst come, fair maiden!"

He took her by the hand, and led her up the golden path; and she saw, in the bright gold, how her face had lost its wrinkles and its time-stains; how her thin gray hair was long and golden again; and how her weary body was changed into a beautiful one, like that of her companion

The messenger led her into a lofty and beautiful room, and she saw coming toward her a smiling and tender face, which, glorious as it was, she did not fear in the least.

"Thy gracious King, and mine!" said

the messenger; and Cecilia sank upon her knees.

"Fair maiden, dear maiden," said the King, "I have sent thee no gift from my hand for years and years, that I might myself put it upon thy white brow."

Cecilia felt the soft pressure of the golden crown, and a wonderful happiness and joy arose in her heart, for she knew that she had won, by waiting and by faithfulness, "The crown of eternal life!"

THE FIRST BOOTS.

Where ankle-ties were wont to trip,
And little gaiters used to patter,
Comes a pair of sturdy boots,
Making such a dreadful clatter;
Half so bright, or half so scarlet,
Never yet was Turkey leather,
And prettier tips were never made,
To pinch ten little toes together.

Marching up, and marching down,
Much too dignified for dancing,
Pretending to be quite at ease,
Yet ever downward slily glancing;
Where his feet will show the fullest,
There he ever takes his station;
And wonders every passer-by
Doesn't stop in admiration.

Wiping off a speck of dust,
That might mar their shining glory;
Never thinking of how quickly,
Boots will be a worn-out story.
Standing with his handkerchief,
Anxiously to guard his treasure;
With all the cares of ownership,
Mingled with his proudest pleasure.

TWO CARLOS.

THERE was an Italian once, whose name was Carlo, and a dog whose name was Carlo, and both Carlos were as poor as ever they could be.

Carlo means Charles in the Italian language, and so, to distinguish the man Carlo from the dog Carlo, we will call the former Charles; or Mr. Charles, would, perhaps, be still better.

Well! Mr. Charles was poor, as I said, but he had once been rich—very rich! I do not know how he lost his riches, but I suspect the reason was, that he was too rich to be careful, and so was poor before he knew it could be possible.

At any rate, he lost every thing but his little dog Carlo. But Carlo was a jewel!

He was servant, support, companion,—brother to Mr. Charles.

So, many thoughtless people laughed at them, when the man pressed his red lips to the spaniel's silky forehead, but they knew nothing of the bond between them; how Carlo bought the loaf of bread for his tired master; how Carlo's dancing to Mr. Charles' guitar, and his comical tricks to the lifting of Mr. Charles' finger, brought in all the pennies they ever had; how it was little Carlo's sympathy that drove the dark shadow from his master's heart and face, when that master thought of the careless, golden past; and how Carlo followed at his heels, and shared his poverty with faithful love all through their wanderings.

For they wandered here, there, and every where,—Mr. Charles and Carlo, and the old guitar.

Sometimes they fared well, and some-

times they fared very ill; sometimes a kindly heart warmed towards them, and they got a bowl of milk and generous slice of bread, but much oftener they were told to go off, and the Italian's thin hand stopped the thrumming of the old guitar, and the feet of Carlo and his master had to be weary, and dusty, and sore, for a while longer.

Ah me! those plump, ruddy farmers had no pity for the pale sad-eyed foreigner; they were industrious and thrifty, and would not bestow their hard earned bread on a vagrant who did nothing but tramp through the country, with a guitar in his hand, and a dog at his heels. "Let him work!" they said.

May be they were quite right, but we know that "Charity covereth a multitude of sins," and both the master and the dog needed much charity.

One evening they arrived at a village, where every one seemed to be merry and gay; now Mr. Charles and Carlo were tired and sad, but they knew from experience that when the heart is gay the hand is open, so instead of resting, they wandered through the streets of the village, and many a rich farmer and tradesman paused to see the dancing and trickery of the silky spaniel, and many a one dropped a coin into the little pocket of Carlo's gay jacket, for the dog had a complete suit of scarlet clothes to dance and perform his tricks in, and he had the cunningest way of pulling the pocket open with his paw, you can imagine.

Carlo, and Mr. Charles had a supper that night, such as they had not indulged in for a long time, and slept together in the barn upon the clean fresh hay.

Perhaps Mr. Charles dreamed that night

of the long ago times, when he had fine suppers every night, and feasted his friends;—they never called him weak in his head then, as they did now; or he might have dreamed of his lovely dark-eyed mother, and have been again the pretty boy who never refused the hungry looking vagrants when they begged of him. He was glad now, that he had never refused them, because he was often hungry now himself and knew what it was to be refused.

But whatever he dreamed of that night, he slept as soundly as possible, and when he opened his eyes in the morning, he felt so rested and happy that he smiled to himself, and without moving from his comfortable place, he whistled to his little Carlo.

But as no answering bark came, he turned over and looked; there was the little round place in the straw where his

pet had slept close beside him, but no Carlo was to be seen.

"The scamp!" he thought, "he has run out to the stable-yard, because I did not wake up early enough for him!"

And out he went to the door, and whistled again and again, but no Carlo appeared. The stable boy came up and looked at him with an astonished face, saying in his mumbling, clumsy way, that he thought he had gone for good.

But Mr. Charles did not notice the stable boy's remarks; he was too frightened for that; for though he whistled and called tenderly, angrily, anxiously, the poor man's little companion gave no answer.

He went around hither, and thither, asking this one, and that one, if they had seen a little dog, and no one had seen him.

Only when he asked the stupid stable-boy, he replied, "Yes!"

"Where is he?" gasped poor Mr. Charles.

"You took him away yourself, and gave me a penny," said the boy, with big eyes wide open.

"No, no, no!" sobbed Mr. Charles, with big tears chasing each other over his thin, dark cheeks, "no, no! he is stolen, my little Carlo is stolen away."

The stable-boy gaped at him with astonishment; partly from seeing him cry for a little dog, and partly because he had not yet got the idea quite through his head, that it was not Mr. Charles who carried the spaniel away in his arms and gave him a penny.

Mr. Charles searched vainly through the village for his little pet, and when he left it, with the old guitar under his arm, together with Carlo's gay clothes, he said that he would search for him without ceasing, until his weary, dusty, feet, were not

able to tramp, and his weary heart could no longer beat.

And so from being a vagrant with a dog at his heels, Mr. Charles became a beggar.

For a long time he carried the guitar under his arm, waiting until he saw Carlo; never touching the strings, never allowing any one to touch the strings, until those dear feet could dance to his music; but poverty makes many a change in the plans of men, and when the pale, foreign, beggar took the guitar to a money-lender in an old German city, the money-lender twanged the strings loudly, before he would lend him the pittance he wanted, to buy his bread.

But Carlo's clothes he never parted with; he bound them around him, and said he would starve rather than part with them; but somehow, though often hungry, cold, wretched, and houseless, without money or hope of getting money, he never quite

starved. He believed that God was saving him so that he might find his pet at last, and be happy again.

One day, as the beggar wandered through one of the dirtiest and poorest streets of Paris, he saw in the window of a poor second-hand shop, a brown and dusty guitar—*his* guitar.

It had been bought and sold many times perhaps, and had found its way to Paris; it seemed as though it had come there, to find its way into its old master's hands.

He entered the shop and asked to look at it; the man looked surprised, for the beggar was the last person who might be buying a guitar; but he brought it out, blew the dust off of it, and handed it to him.

He took it up very tenderly—did Mr. Charles; and, as he recognized the marks upon it, as the marks of his old friend, his

tears fell dully and drearily upon the thick dust.

He took from his pocket five little coins, they were all he had in the world, and put them before the man.

The Jew looked keenly at the beggar; but he saw the empty pocket, the thin, thin, face, the haggard lines about the mouth, and then glanced down at the worthless old guitar.

"Yes!" he nodded. So Mr. Charles took it up and carried it home with him to his den, cleaned it carefully, and hid it away.

But then, he thought he might carry it about with him, and maybe Carlo might hear the old familiar sound, and then he could find him, so he took it out again from its hiding place, and never went on the busy streets, without his old friend under his arm.

It never occured to the Italian that Carlo

might be dead, he only thought that if he searched long enough and wide enough, and earnest enough, that his darling *must* be found.

It was very pitiful to see him peering into every carriage where a pet dog sat on the seat, and searching anxiously about when he heard the whine of a dog.

He stood one day upon the corner of two great Parisian streets, thrumming, with his long, slender, weary, fingers, the strings of the guitar. The streets were crowded with carriages and foot-passengers, and more than once he was nearly thrown to the pavement by the rude jostling of the passers-by.

A fine carriage came dashing swiftly down the street, and a pet spaniel sat upon the seat by the driver. The carriage was too far off for him to see distinctly,

and he waited eagerly for it to come nearer, still thrumming upon the guitar.

The carriage came nearer, nearer, nearer!

The vagrant's great dark eyes began to light with hope, and happiness, and love, as they had not lighted for a long, long time.

The carriage dashed by, the little spaniel turned its head, and, with a quick, sharp bark of joy, sprang from the high seat down among the cruel, heavy wheels, the horses' iron feet, and all the dash and whirl of the busy crossing, and all because of the dark beggar on the corner.

The fine carriage stopped, and a fair lady held out her white hands for her pet; but her pet was lying in a pair of dark hands, and he was licking those hands with all his poor, dying strength.

They mingled their tears together over him—fair lady and dark beggar.

Mr. Charles took to her Carlo's gay fine clothes, and together they put them on to him, and he was buried in the great Montmartre, with a little white stone over the grave, which said:

"CARLO."

"THE LOST IS FOUND."

In Germany, in France, in England, in Italy, and in many other countries, a pale, dark man begs and wanders, with an old guitar in his hand, and a strange light in his eyes. He says he is searching for his little dog Carlo, who was stolen from him, many years ago, in a little German village.

No one knows who he is, or where he comes from, only they say that his head is turned as by some great sorrow, and that he does not remember many things which have happened.

But how can we say, but that some time the poor mad beggar will stand in the

streets of the Eternal City, and that the Father, who looks down upon him now with a pitying heart, will say, with a welcoming smile,

"Carlo, the lost is found."

THE PRINCESS ETHEL.

Ever and ever so many years ago, England was divided into seven little Kingdoms, whose names are so long and hard, that I never have been able to learn them, and so I could not teach them to you even if I would.

Over one of these Kingdoms, which we will call Wessex, there reigned for very many years, a good, great and gracious King, named Derrick.

Now Derrick had no sons, but he was blessed with three daughters, whose names were Ulrica, Geneura, and Ethelinda, who was called Ethel, for short; Ulrica was renowned throughout the Kingdoms for her exceeding beauty; Geneura was cele-

brated for her learning, for she actually could write her whole name; I don't mean to say that she could do it easily, and without the slightest trouble, but that she *could* write it, if she had plenty of time; and I must add that no other human being in all Wessex was half so learned as the Princess Geneura.

As for Ethel, the youngest, she was neither beautiful nor learned, and was celebrated for nothing, unless it might be for her large mouth.

The religion of the worthy King Derrick and his subjects, so far as they had any religion, was that of the Druids; it was a very cruel and bloody religion, but I suppose the Wessexians must have been well satisfied, for they looked very coldly upon some good Christian monks who appeared in Wessex, and who tried to teach them how to be merciful, and meek and lowly of

heart; and finally threatened to kill them if they did not leave the Kingdom.

Derrick's good Queen and his three daughters listened to the teaching of the monks; but Ulrica was thinking all the time how very becoming her new sheep-skin dress must be; Geneura declared, in her very best grammar, that their story was quite impossible; poor young Ethel listened meekly enough, but being very slow-witted, the monks despaired of her comprehending them; so the good Queen alone profited by their teachings.

After a while the poor Queen fell sick; so very sick that she knew she could not live; then she sent for one of the monks and when he had come and was kneeling down by her bedside, she said to him—

"Good monk, I have three daughters; one is so beautiful, that many would be glad to protect her, one is so very learned

that she can protect herself; but the other is plain and simple, so I beg of you, to give up to her a talisman which will protect her from evil."

The monk murmured his assent, saying, "to-morrow gracious Queen," and went his way; sighing to think how little his teachings and her piety had availed against her heathen education; for the good man well knew the value of charms and knew also how the only charm against trouble was a pure and trusting heart.

He did not tell this to the Queen, for he knew that she would not understand him.

That very night the Queen died; and the next morning as the monk was passing through the palace-garden, he saw the poor little maiden, for whom the amulet was intended, lying upon the wet ground, with her face to the earth, sobbing as though her heart were broken.

"Poor little maiden!" said the monk, kindly, "thou hast lost thine only friend. But weep not so bitterly, my poor, poor child, weep not so hard."

But still the Princess wept, and for a long time he tried vainly to comfort her; but, at length, being obliged to return to his brethren, he pressed the talisman into her hand, saying tenderly, as he did so:

"Wear it next thy heart, remember the lesson it bears, and, truly, neither storms, nor sin, nor wickedness, shall prevail against it."

Ethel hid the talisman in her robe, and, when she went into the house, she tied it to a stout string, and hung it about her neck, so that it hung just over her heart.

King Derrick mourned his good Queen very sincerely, and gave her remains as grand and pompous a funeral as even Queens could have in those times; a funer-

al which was attended by all the court, and by all of the nobility of Wessex, as well as by crowds of the common people.

Even Ulrica forgot her worldliness, and Geneura her learning, to mourn and weep beside the grave of their dear mother; and Ethel was the quietest and the saddest little Princess in all the Seven Kingdoms, although she spoke no word.

Indeed she wept so much that her father, the King, said one day to her:

"My child, thou must be ill, for around thy blue eyes the skin is swollen and red, and thy face is as white as pearl."

"Thou must run out into the woods, daughter, and breathe the sweet air."

The King looked very wise, and thought himself very acute, but little Princess Ethel smiled sadly, and said nothing.

But she went, in accordance with his wishes, out into the open vales, and the

green ancient woods; at first the King ordered a guard of soldiers to protect her in her rambles; for Wessex, though a comfortable little kingdom, was anything but free from robbers and outlaws, and quite infested with wolves and other dangerous wild animals.

But Ethel not being accustomed to much royal pomp and display, was not only embarrassed but actually terrified by her uncouth escort, and she begged her father to send them with her no more.

"I'd rather go alone, dear father," she cried.

"But," said he, "there is very great danger, my little one, and you could ill protect yourself."

"Ah!" she replied, "I am protected by a potent charm, which I wear next to my heart."

So the King, who devoutly believed in

charms and spells, said not another word of danger; neither did he ask her who had given her the charm, for which omission on his part, she was very glad, and when the soldiers were told that their services would no longer be required, they were very glad, too.

Those who watched Ethel closely, noticed that she soon stopped her excursions into the grand old forest, and went often to the little village near the castle; that she went in and out of the miserable peasants' huts, and often stopped to speak with them at their labor.

Then those who remarked it, laughed merrily between themselves, and guessed that the young Princess found her talisman powerless against even a field-mouse, so that she dared not trust it in an encounter with bears or wolves.

This was a very ill-natured speech to

make, but it was made because the true reason could not be guessed at; how could they know why it was that Ethel went into the wretched huts, and helped and comforted the peasants and their wives; or why she sold the great gold ring which her father had given her, in order to buy grain for the starving laborers to eat?

One day, as she was strolling about in the forest, gathering the fair wild flowers, whose beauty was unseen by any other's eyes beside hers, she put her hand to her heart, as if to still the cruel pain which had been gnawing there ever since the the day her mother left her, and she pressed her hand against the charm which the monk had given her, and which she wore over her heart; and suddenly there flashed through her mind the words of the good man, "Remember the lesson it bears."

"The lesson!" she murmured; "what lesson, I know not truly! only I would serve him who loved me so well, and whom I know my mother loved so well."

And then she remembered suddenly, other words which had been spoken by that same good monk, and which he had told her, had been uttered by the lips of our dear Lord himself—"The poor ye have always with you."

The pain at her heart ceased then, and a blessed warmth and peace came suddenly over the poor young Princess, and she never doubted for an instant but that she had remembered the lesson it bore.

This was why she went among the slaves and peasants of the village, and bore without a murmur the wonder of Ulrica, the disgust of Geneura, and the anger of her father; for King Derrick was exceedingly angry with Ethel, when he heard of her

charity, and he sternly forbade her going; but, although she prized the love of her father, and feared the displeasure of her King, yet she loved and feared her Heavenly Father yet more, so she went, still in her plain, old, dress, with her quiet, g rave ways, into the huts and hovels of the poor, whom she had "always with her."

Thrice the King reproved her, and forbade her; but, though she hung her head, and said only, "dear father I do so love the poor," yet again and again she disobeyed his injunctions, until his patience was exhausted.

One day as the three Princesses were working with their needles, an usher entered and informed them that their company was required in the presence-chamber, as soon as might be.

So the three maidens hastened and arrayed themselves in their finest state-robes,

and entered the presence-chamber one after another.

The room was crowded with lords and barons, while Derrick sat upon his throne draped with crimson drapery, with his grandest state-robes, and his jewelled crown, looking, in truth, quite a different being from the Derrick who lounged about the palace in the mornings, in the dressing-gown and slippers of those days.

The three maidens came forward and stood in front of the throne; then the King said:—

"Four and twenty years ago to-day, I became king of Wessex, and upon this day for four and twenty years, I have given gifts to three of my subjects. Last year it was to the three lords of Gwinned, Rupert, and Welwyk I gave gifts, and this year I desire to give them to my three daughters."

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The barons and lords cheered and shouted, then king Derrick said :—

"Ulrica, stand forth!" Ulrica stepped forward a little, when Derrick said, "Ulrica, what upon earth dost thou love the best?"

And Ulrica replied, I love best beauty and beautiful things, for they give joy to old and to young, to rich and to poor."

Then Derrick took from a table beside him a beautiful necklace set with large pearls, and he fastened it around her white neck, saying, "In all my kingdom, I ween there is no fairer thing than this."

Ulrica was quite overwhelmed with delight, so stooping to her knees, she kissed the King's hand saying, "thanks, dear father and King!"

Then Derrick said to his second daughter, "Geneura, stand forth!"

As Geneura with burning cheeks stepped

forward, the King said to her, "Geneura, what upon earth dost thou love the best?"

Geneura answered, "I have searched diligently for knowledge in many places, and I find that the thing most to be loved by men, is gold."

King Derrick said, "my treasurer shall give to thee, Geneura, five large bags of the gold thou dost love."

Geneura knelt, pressed her lips to his hand, and said:

"Thanks, dear father and king!"

King Derrick then said to his youngest daughter:

"Ethel, stand forth!"

Ethel did as she was bid, her father saying to her, as to the others:

"Ethelinda, what upon earth dost thou love the best?"

Ethel answered:

"I love best the poor, and, next to them, you, dear father!"

The timid little heart beat quickly and hopefully, but the king replied, wrathfully:

"To thee I will give a coarse black robe, and a knotted rope for a girdle, and thou shalt leave the gates of this palace at sundown, and go amongst thy poor."

Poor Ethel felt that this was hard to bear, but she was proud, if she was neither fair nor wise; so proud, that she forced back the ready tears from her eyes, and forced her voice to be calm, as she answered, kneeling at the foot of the throne, and kissing the king's hand:

"Thanks, dear father and king!"

The great room was silent; the lords and barons looked at one another, astonished; Ulrica and Geneura exchanged glances; when the king arose, and said:

"Make way there for the princesses."

So they passed out; and when sad Ethel saw how glad and triumphant her sisters were, she tried to look the same, so that no one need think it needful to pity her.

The lords and barons were all more or less dismayed and disgusted at the idea of a princess of the blood royal being turned out of the palace in a slave's dress, to herd with slaves; but none of them had courage enough to tell him so, for he never revoked his words, and might make them suffer for their interference besides.

So, at sundown, Ethel went gravely and proudly out of the palace gates, arrayed in the coarse black gown, and with the girdle of knotted cord around her waist.

No one sighed for her, no one helped her, no one bade her God-speed; but there was a voice within which upheld her, and upon her heart rested the monk's talisman.

The sun sank very fast, and it was quite

dark before she was half-way to the village, where she meant to stay that night. In vain did she try to comfort herself with the monk's words:

"Wear it near thy heart, remember the lesson it bears, and, truly, neither storms, nor sin, nor wickedness, shall prevail against it."

In vain she pressed the precious charm closer and closer to her heart. Despite her efforts, pride and courage gave way, and she crouched upon the ground with her face to the wet grass, and wept, very, very bitterly.

After a while, she staggered up and on, but had proceeded but a little way when two robbers sprang out from the darkness, and each seizing an arm, they dragged her to where their chief was carousing.

But, so appealing is charity, so self-speaking are good deeds, that the half-

barbarian outlaw knew her to be the good princess Ethel, when his eyes first rested upon her.

To make sure, however, he asked her:

"Who art thou?"

To which Ethel, half-dead with terror, answered:

"I am Ethelinda, daughter of Derrick, king of this kingdom of Wessex."

"Where goest thou?" said the outlaw.

"Unto the village, to seek for shelter," she replied.

"Ay," said the robber, "and so thou shalt, for well I know how you saved my mother from starving; therefore, two of my men shall see you there safely, and may harm never befall you!" With that he called the two men who had captured her, told them what he wished, and bade them go. They little liked the task, but they performed the duty faithfully.

The poor, always help the poor.

Though Princess Ethel wandered and suffered much, yet she never suffered the pangs of hunger, nor knew the time when her head lacked shelter. She often found the least gratitude where she gave the greatest kindness; and, where the favors were but small, she often received the warmest and truest thankfulness.

Sometimes her heart would be quite sick, and she would sigh for the fine palace of her father, but she always found that the talisman had a wonderful power of upholding and comforting; and, though she wandered to and fro for many years, until her young face was old and sober, and her brown cheeks brown and wrinkled; although the poor were, indeed, always with her; though storms, and sin, and wickedness surrounded her, the words of the good monk were never found false, and

none of these harms could ever prevail against that charm which she wore next her heart, and whose lesson she had remembered at such cost.

PART SECOND.

Derrick, king of Wessex, weary of court life, and lonely without his three children (for both Ulrica and Geneura were married and gone), announced to the lords and barons of his court, that he was about to retire to private life for a little while. His two well-beloved sons-in-law, Lords Rupert and Welwyk, would manage the business, he said, while he was gone.

Many were the wonders, the cogitations, the suggestions, and the doubts expressed, when this resolution was made known. Everybody had an opinion to offer, excepting the two sons-in-law, who alone knew the true reason.

The truth was, Derrick had been told that the holy and sacred religion of the Druids was fast losing ground in Wessex, and that all the common people, as well as very many nobles, had openly, or secretly, declared their belief in Jesus Christ.

This religion had been spread abroad, it was said, chiefly through a certain woman called Ethel, the Christian, and now the Druid priests demanded the life of this woman from the worthy Derrick. But Derrick, though not very soft-hearted usually, refused to have this woman executed; for he believed in his heart that Ethel, the Christian, was no other than Ethelinda, youngest daughter of the king of Wessex.

So, without saying a word to any one but his sons-in-law, he determined to seek out his child himself, and went out of the palace-gate at sundown, without saying a word to any one, but swearing, by the

sacred number seven, never to return, save at sunrise, with Ethel by his side.

He wandered to and fro, hither and thither; learning very many new things, enduring many hardships, seeing many abuses of power, beholding much misery; but, though he heard blessings showered down upon the head of Ethel—though he found scarcely a hut, however wretched, that knew her not,—yet never once did his wearied eyes rest upon her face, never once did his tired hand grasp hers, and, truly, his old heart was sick with waiting.

One night Derrick slept upon the ground by the roadside, near to a tall castle whose name he did not know. He dreamed that he was beset by robbers, and beaten cruelly; that, as he lay upon the ground moaning, he heard the clatter of horses' feet, and called out:

"Hold, brother, and give me help, for I have been robbed and beaten!"

"Robbed and beaten!" answered the horseman, whose voice sounded strangely like the Princess Ulrica's, "then thou art not beautiful to see! Farewell!"

Poor Derrick groaned dismally, as he heard the clatter of the horses' feet die away in the distance.

The dews fell heavily, his battered frame ached dreadfully, and there appeared to be no hope for him, when he heard the sound of another approaching horseman. Gathering all his strength, he cried out:

"Help, for I have been robbed and beaten!"

But the horseman would not stop, and called out, as he went by, in a voice precisely like the Princess Geneura's:

"Time is money! Time is money!"

He paid no attention to the howl of pain

and indignation which burst from the lips of the unfortunate Derrick, but disappeared in the darkness.

The king knew no more until he opened his eyes in the dull dawn, to find his wounds quite imaginary; but a sweet face was bending over him, sadly changed, yet well known, and a sweet voice, not changed at all, said:

"First, the poor, and then, thee, dear father; but thou first, when thou art poor."

King Derrick sprang to his feet, and caught his child to his heart, telling her, in a very confused and foolish, but happy way, how sorry and glad, how miserable and delighted, he was.

"Ho!" he cried, "is not that the castle of Ouse? Strange it is, I knew it not last night! Come, child, the sun is rising; thou art by my side, and so, now, let us be going.

So they went straight in to the great dining-hall, where all the court was breakfasting; and, when they saw King Derrick and his daughter, they gave a great shout, that made the hall ring; then the king said, gravely:

"We have all returned safely;" then, to Ethel: "My child, thou hast passed through many dangers, unscathed. Tell me now, I beg, who and what has protected thee?"

Ethel replied, modestly:

"The poor have protected me, and this, my charm."

She put into his hand that talisman which had protected her, and which she had found powerful wherever she went. It was but a cross of silver, rudely and roughly wrought, but neither storms, nor sin, nor wickedness, had prevailed against it.

King Derrick looked at it curiously, then pressed it to his lips, and said:

"So truly do I love thee, dear daughter, that, for the poor having protected thee, I will henceforth protect them; and, since this cross has protected thee, I will hereafter protect it, and those who wear it.

"Since thou art a Christian, I will also be a Christian; and the faith I accept, the badge I follow, my subjects will accept and follow."

Then the hall shook with another tremendous shout and cheer; and all the lords and barons of Wessex abandoned the faith of their fathers, and became as good Christians as they could.

For very many years, Derrick, and his maiden daughter, Ethel, lived in the castle and palace of Ouse; and when at last Ethel died, as we all must die, sooner or later, Rupert, who was then king of Wes-

sex, and Ulrica, his queen, had graven on the stone slab over her grave:

"The poor ye have always with you."

And upon the stone cross, at the head of the grave, was graven:

"Remember the lesson it bears; and, truly, neither storms, nor sin, nor wickedness, shall prevail against it."

THE DEAD BIRD.

Poor little hands, dropped downward,
  Dear little face, *so* sad;
Red lips, with a pitiful quiver;—
  Too bad, little Dickey, too bad.
Two round chubby cheeks, all dripping;
  A chest that is heaving with sobs;
And the mocking splendor of tear-drops,
  On the gilded wires and knobs.

Tender-hearted one, be not so woeful;
  Wreathe not in sorrow thy face;
For a new birdie, gayer and brighter,
  To-morrow shall sing in its place.
Let me wipe off the pitying tear-drops;
  Tears, precious, can nothing avail,
And it never yet drove away trouble,
  To clasp her cold hand, and bewail.

The butterflies out in the sunshine,
  The baby-cloud shadows that pass,
The crocuses down in the meadow,
  The daisies that shine in the grass,
Are all very weary of waiting
  For their dear little playmate to come;
And if you don't hasten, my darling,
  They'll all fall asleep in the sun.

Alas! can I bring you no comfort?
  Must affection and tenderness fail?
Have silver and gold lost their magic,
  Can the powerful nothing avail?
Are the tears I wipe away, leaving
  But furrows where others will start?
Must the little pet's house remain empty,
  And empty its place in thy heart?

Ah! Heaven will listen and pity,
  And the grief will vanish away!
What! never can cease to be sorry,
  For scolding him but yesterday?
But, how healing a balm is repentance!
  God's messengers, smiling, we trust,
Now gather these angelic jewels,
  As treasures that never will rust.

CROSS CHRISTIE.

She lived away up in the attic with her poor, feeble, old grandmother; in the attic of her Uncle John's fine house, whose floors were covered with soft carpets, whose windows were hung with lace, and whose parlors were brilliant with mirrors; that fine house, which everybody admired, and neither knew, nor cared if they did know, that Mr. John Hartley's mother and niece lived together away up in the attic.

His two children were very much admired; although, to tell the truth, the boys and girls at school called them unsavory names,—said they were mean, and stingy, and "stuck-up."

But those friends, who sat by his fireside,

and dined at his table, called them pretty children, and bright children, and dear, good, sweet children, but nobody ever said such kind things of Christie.

So she grew up shy, and pale, and very sober, in the high ill-furnished attic; thought of by no one; cared for by no one; wearing her little dresses until they almost dropped to pieces, and never dreaming of asking for new.

And the poor old grandmother! what would she have done, half-blind, and so very feeble as she was, had it not been for that pair of small brown hands; those willing, busy, loving hands, which swept the hearth, arranged the scanty furniture, and served their solitary meals; the gentle little hands, whose touch never failed to ease the pain in the wrinkled forehead, and which were never careless or awkward.

The blinded eyes could not see how quiet and pale the little handmaiden was, nor

how she grew paler and plainer day by day; never saw the little lips repress the sigh of weariness, when the oft-repeated prattle of merry childhood, joyous youth, and happy prime, was repeated for the hundredth time; and never saw, poor, old eyes, how Christie's eyes grew moist, and Christie's cheeks flushed, when the aged one was over-fretful or over-querulous.

Her two cousins, George Hartley and his proud sister Annie, called her *cross*, because she was shy and sober; and from Annie's "Oh you cross thing!" they got to calling her "Crosspatch!" and at last never thought of calling her any thing else.

Old Mrs. Hartley was feeble and nervous, so Christie never would allow her noisy cousins to come up-stairs where she was, and even once took courage to appeal to her Uncle John against them; which earned them a scolding, so they called her

"Crosspatch," oftener and louder than ever.

"Grandmother," said Christie, one morning, as she sat by the window, in a flood of sunshine, sewing on some little bit of sewing, "I had a pretty dream last night."

"Well, dear?" said the old lady, all attention.

"I dreamed," said Christie, waving her foot to and fro in a little shadow on the floor, "that I came in here to find you, and you were gone. I called you and hunted for you, but I couldn't find you, so I went down stairs to tell Uncle John; when I told him I dreamed that, he turned away from me and went out the door.

"Then I was more sad and frightened than ever, but I came up-stairs again; and when I opened the door you were standing right in the middle of the room.

I was going to run to you, but I couldn't,

then I saw how you was beautiful in your face, without any wrinkles; and you stood up straight, and your hair wasn't gray any more.

"I thought I held out my hands to you, and cried out, 'Grandmother!' but my feet seemed to have grown to the floor; then I thought you began to cry and wring your hands; and I felt so badly to see you cry, that I cried too.

"Then I thought I felt something heavy on my shoulders, that bent me all down, but, though I turned my head as far around as I could, to see it, and take it off, yet I could neither see nor touch it.

"Then I cried harder and harder, but I thought you came up and wiped my eyes, and told me if I was patient and didn't cry, it would not be heavy any more.

"Then Uncle John came in, and put his hand on it, and made it heavy again; and

I dreamed that you cried when you saw him, but you said,—'Bear it patiently, dear Christie.'

"Then I looked around again, and I saw that it was a cross, like there is on your Bible; and you said again—

"'Bear it patiently, dear Christie;' and then I looked at you, and saw there was sunshine all round your head.

"And I was so happy, for I thought it was round my head, too, and the cross was lighter than nothing on my back.

"Then I woke up.

"Wasn't that a pretty dream? I thought it was too bad for me to wake up, when the dream was so pleasant and pretty."

"Bless the child! She has seen the shadow of Death!" exclaimed Mrs. Hartley.

"What?" said Christie, but her grandmother did not answer; so the little girl

sang softly her blithe little song, and saw only the shadow which was on the floor.

But the shadow *had* fallen on the invalid, for it was only a few weeks before she was carried down stairs, white and cold, into the grand parlor, into which she never had gone during her lifetime; and her son John, and his wife and children, gave her a few tears in her death, though they had given her no smiles in her life.

Mrs. Hartley wiped away the tears from her children's eyes with her soft cambric handkerchief, and wondered why Christie did not cry; the little girl had lost her only friend, yet she sat there with her brown hands folded on her black dress, and her eyes cast down, dry and tearless.

It seemed to her that the tears fell into her heart, and were frozen there; and all she could think of, was that dear face, *so* cold, that was to be buried out of sight—

that never could be loved, or tended, or cared for, by that loving heart again.

As they stood by the grave, as the spadefuls of earth rattled on the coffin, the fair-haired young preacher read the words—

"Dust to dust, and ashes to ashes." And his voice trembled, for he saw Christie's stony eyes and pallid cheeks, and his eyes grew wet with tears,—the only tears shed by that open grave, and those were for the living—not the dead;—for the poor little girl whose grief was beyond tears.

"What will we do with her?" was the question which her Aunt Emma asked, a few days after the funeral.

Mr. Hartley thought of sending her to a cheap boarding-school, but his wife shook her head, and said he had much better get her a place as a nurse-girl.

He hesitated at first, for she was his only sister's only child, but at last he took his

wife's advice, and called at the office the next morning, as he went down town.

"I—ah! I want—" he hesitated, "to put a little girl out as a nurse-girl."

The man pulled out his big book; "Nurse-girl, nurse-girl," he said, as though he was afraid of forgetting it; "nurse-girl, nurse-girl,"—and he ran his finger quickly down the edge of the pages; "nurse-girl, nurse—oh yes, here's one."

"'Mrs. Millet,'" he read from the book, "'House No. 138 Taylor Street, private boarding-house.

"'One child, two and a half years old; terms—board, and ten dollars a month.' But she'll pick up lots of things by the way of presents, if she's anyways bright and pretty," added the man.

Mr. Hartley shook his head. "Any other?" he asked.

The man resumed his searching, but stopped after a few moments.

"Yes, here's another," he said, "but I don't know as you'll——" then he read—

"'Mrs. Bunker, house No. 5 Ellen Street, two children; terms—board and clothes.'"

He looked up at Mr. Hartley.

"If you just want a home for the child, and don't care for her to make money, this is a good place. The woman is of the nicer sort, and won't be hard on her, I guess."

"Well," said the inquirer, "I think that will do. Just give me the address, please, and I'll go and see her."

The man did so, and eyed his customer sharply at the same time; but he made no remark.

Mrs. Bunker was thin and sharp in her person as well as her manner, and poor, quiet Christie, used only to her grand-

mother's feeble and tender voice, was sadly afraid of her.

She had a very hard time at No. 5 Ellen Street, for those two children were equal to five ordinary ones, and Mrs. Bunker had such a passion for having things tidy, and such an objection to work, that it made a heavy load for those little shoulders.

She thought often and often of her dream;—"Bear it patiently, Christie!" often rang in her ears in those weary days when Johnnie was *so* heavy, and Katie so self-willed and saucy; when from the time the sun rose until long after it set, the feet were on the treadmill, and were so often pierced with thorns; and the hands and arms were tired so much that the short night's sleep was not enough to rest them; when punishment never failed, and rewards never came.

Yes, she had a hard time, and she was *not* strong; yet she bore it very patiently.

After she was once off his hands, Uncle John Hartley never troubled himself concerning her, although once or twice, in speaking of her to his wife, he said: "Suppose George should come back."

"Well," Mrs. Hartley would answer, "suppose he does? He can do just as he likes; we are not to answer to him for the child, are we?"

"No, I suppose not," would be the reply. But neither Mrs. Hartley nor her husband seemed to remember whom they *would* have to answer to; neither thought of that Father whose loving eye was over his child, and who sent his blessing upon her, because she bore His burdens patiently.

Every night, after the heavy baby and the restless, troublesome girl had been tuck-

ed into their beds and gone to sleep, when the dishes were all washed, and the table set for morning, Christie would slip out from the back door, run two or three squares in the lamp-light, a little piece in the dusk, and stop before the church-yard, where her grandmother was buried.

It was very, very dark there, but the little girl was not afraid, for she knew no reason why she should be; the tall trees bent their long slender branches down over her head, and whispered as the air swept through them; and the little girl would stop to listen, for their voices were sweet and soft, and Mrs. Bunker's was harsh and loud; then, besides, she fancied they whispered of Heaven, and that they called her "dear Christie," and she loved them.

Her grandmother's grave was covered with soft, short grass, and when Christie knelt beside it, and laid her thin cheek on

the cool grass, it seemed to her like that aged hand, cool and tender, which had smoothed that little cheek lovingly so often; and the thought—she was a simple child,—but she thought that, when she whispered, "Grandmother, grandmother," she was heard and answered through the sweet voices of the long-armed trees. Oh, no! it was not in that lonely, quiet, holy place that she was afraid; the little birds peered at her, with their bright, round eyes, over the edges of their nests, as she told her little trials—great for her to bear,—and shed those few tears that eased her heart so much, but she fancied they were sorry for her, and she was not afraid of them; it was when she was going home, and curious men and women stared at her in the crowded streets, that she was afraid. In the long summer twilight, when she went to the church-yard, she used to notice a boy there,

who, like herself, seemed forlorn and friendless; but he tended and cried over two graves, instead of one.

He was a very tall boy, with a sad and subdued face, and large brown hands, which were crossed in front of him when they were not busy; this would have made him odd and comical in the eyes of most children, but Christie felt less like laughing than crying when she saw him, for he bore the evident marks of sorrow in his face.

She was too shy to speak to him, and he was too shy to speak to her, but each was sorry for the other, and looked it, although they neither of them spoke it.

One day, as she came down stairs with the heavy baby in her arms, she saw somebody standing in the hall, talking with Mrs. Bunker; something in his attitude struck her as familiar, and she looked the second

time; yes, she had seen many times those large, meekly-crossed hands, and the grave, shy face.

"How are your two brothers, James, that you thought so much of?" asked Mrs. Bunker.

The big tears started into his eyes, as he answered:—

"I have *no* brothers now, Mrs. Bunker; my brothers are dead."

The tears were thick in Christie's eyes, too, as she heard the words, and he must have seen them, for he smiled at her faintly through his tears.

"Well, Miss," said her mistress, turning around at her sharply; "what do you want here? Just you march along, and mind your own business.

"No, James," she said, turning to the boy, "tell your mother that I keep a nurse-girl

now, such as she is, and do my sewing myself."

"Isn't she a good girl?" said the boy, wonderingly.

"Oh! good enough, I suppose," was the answer; "but she's a cross, peevish piece. I knew she was that before she came, but I took her out of charity."

The red blood flushed up hotly in that pale little cheek, when Christie heard these words; she hurried down the hall with Johnnie, who was as fat as she was thin, and tried to forget them, but they *would* ring in her ears.

She thought of her Uncle John then, too, and of her cousins, proud and rich, while she was buffeted, and scolded, and made to work until she was very tired; and she wondered why it should be so.

She remembered her grandmother's teach-

ings, and she *tried* to be meek and patient, but she found it very hard to do.

"I took her out of charity!"—She thought of her uncle's fine house, of her cousins' fine clothes, and she knew that her heart was bitter against them.

"Cross and peevish!"—that was their work, too; and she almost hated them then.

Her dream was coming true, perhaps, and her Uncle John's hand *did* make the burden heavier; and perhaps, she thought, her dear grandmother *was* crying to see her little girl so bent and weary.

Still, she knew she was wrong, and when she crept through the church-yard that evening, she thought the trees sighed only, but did not whisper "dear Christie," to-night.

The more she murmured at her hard lot, the more unhappy she became; she shed more tears, by far, and found less comfort

in them; the voices in the trees grew fainter and sadder in their sighs, and the world seemed to grow dark about her.

One night, as she stole home from her grandmother's grave, earlier than usual, she heard a voice singing sweetly and softly. She stopped and listened, for she loved sweet music, and somehow those gentle tones touched her, and soothed her troubled and angry heart.

It was a tall, old house before which she stopped; and even Christie could see that many families lived in it, and that they were all poor; here and there, a piece of board filled the place of a broken pane of glass, and in some windows, were old hats or bundles of rags.

Yet that voice floated down,—that sweet, yet strange voice; and after a little, she could tell the words of what the singer sang, or rather chanted.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. I will give you rest."

Christie put her hands before her face, and turned her face to the wall; "I will give you rest."

"Rest." It was such a lovely word, and it was just what she longed for.

She had heard that line many a time, and read it many a time; she knew well that JESUS spoke it, and that it was to such as she that he spoke: "All ye that labor, and are heavy laden." And she was both.

Softly the voice floated down upon her; little knew the singer of the unseen listener to his song.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest."

Christie stayed and listened as long as she dared, and then ran home; but

all the next day, as she went about her work, she repeated those kind, pitiful words over and over to herself; and, somehow, the baby seemed not near so heavy, the dishes not near so many, the mistress not near so harsh.

She began to see now that, if she had borne her cross patiently and unmurmuringly, it would not have been near so heavy upon her. Her grandmother had said,—

"Bear it patiently, dear Christie," and she had not borne it patiently.

The next night, James, as Mrs. Bunker called the tall boy whom she had met in the churchyard, was tending the two little graves, when Christie knelt by her grandmother's; and pretty soon he came over and spoke to her.

"Little girl," he said, with his hands crossed before him, in his odd, old-fashioned

way, "are you cross? Why are you cross?"

"I try not to be," answered Christie, humbly; "but I have very much to make me."

"Yes," answered he, "you do. What is your name, and whose grave is this?"

"My name is Christie, and this is my grandmother's grave."

"*My* name is James Dean," said he, "and those two little graves are where my two dear little brothers are buried.

"I loved them *so* dearly, and worked for them *so* hard, but they died a month apart; and now," he added, with a quivering voice, "my dear mother is dying. But yet I am not cross, little girl."

"I know," said she, "I know your voice now; it is the one which sang, 'Come unto Me,' last night."

"Yes," said James, "I sang that last

night to mother, and that is the reason, you know, why I am not cross, because I take His yoke upon me."

It was odd to hear him talk so gravely and sadly, yet earnestly; earnestly indeed, for his words comforted Christie then, and long afterward. She went with him that night to see his pale, gentle mother, whose sweet voice sounded like her grandmother's, and who took the friendless little girl quite to her heart.

She loved to see the tall and apparently awkward boy, lift his mother tenderly in his arms, and care for her as handily as Christie could do; and somehow, in helping, assisting, and loving them, in her spare time, she forgot how hard a time she had, and the burden grew to be as light as nothing on her little shoulders.

One day, as she was busily washing dishes, Mrs. Bunker came in, and, telling

her that her uncle was in the parlor, bade her go "and tidy herself," which she did rather reluctantly; for Uncle John never had visited her before, and she could not tell why he should come now;—without knowing why, she feared him.

But when she came shyly into the parlor, she saw, not her Uncle John, but another gentleman; a kind-faced, gray-bearded man, who said—

"So, your name is Christie Collins, is it, my dear?"

"Yes, sir," said she, looking at him earnestly.

"And my name is George Hartley, your Uncle George, little Christie, come to love you and take care of you, all the way from China."

Mrs. Bunker heard something like crying, as she listened at the parlor door; and she scolded vigorously a little while afterward,

when Uncle George insisted upon Christie's going away right then; but her scolding did no good, for in a few moments Christie and Uncle George, from China, ran down the front steps at No. 5 Ellen Street, never to ascend them again.

Oh, the talks they had in the cosy parlor of the old-fashioned hotel; of the two proud cousins who had called her "Cross Christie;" of the dear, gentle grandmother, whose very grave had been such a comfort to her; of Mrs. Bunker, and Katie, and Johnnie, and the piles of greasy dishes; of James Dean, with his sweet voice, his odd, grave ways, and his womanly gentleness with his mother; and of that mother who was descending into the shadow of death, over so rough and thorny a road; of the green grave which *she* loved, and the two little graves which *he* loved; and Uncle George's eyes glistened as she told him.

Then she told him her dream, and how it had seemed to come true; and of her hard thoughts toward her Uncle John; of her unhappiness, her repentance, their kindness, and her joy; and both resolved that the light over her path should drive away the darkness of theirs.

She is Happy Christie now—Cross Christie no longer; and the dream has come true, for the cross on her shoulders has fallen off, and a halo of the glory of many good deeds shines around her head.

THE WHITE ROSES.

It was such a little garden, and it had such a hard time! What with the soil being so bad, and the landlord so cross, and the slips so contrary, I had hard time to get any garden at all; then the watering-pot leaked, and the trowel was lost; we asked the landlord to get us a nice rose-bush to put in the center bed, and he brought us, instead, a wizened, unshapely arbor-vitæ. I ought to have protested and refused to receive it then, and I knew it, but, to tell the truth, I was a little afraid of our cross landlord; so I foolishly let him plant it right in the center of my center-bed. And it is there yet, ugly and ungainly as ever, only larger.

Nothing will grow under or around it, and it is a constant eyesore to me, spoiling, I think, the whole appearance of a very pretty little garden; but our cross landlord still retains his frowns, and every week fixes my ugly tree more securely in its position. Then the rats got into the garden.

The most industrious and energetic lot of rats I ever saw; they burrowed and burrowed all through my little garden, until it was nothing but a honey-comb; and they *were so* hungry!

They ate all my dahlia and lily bulbs, lunched daintily on my tender young verbenas, and lugged daisy-roots and delicate young slips off bodily into their holes.

With a plentiful supply of ashes and broken glass, however, I finally got rid of these pests, and a fresh application to indulgent friends for fresh slips, soon replaced my collection.

One day, as I was walking along Harrison Street, I saw on the edge of the sidewalk, a poor, abandoned little rose-tree. Upon picking it up and looking at it carefully, I thought I detected some faint signs of life, so I took it home and planted it in a shady corner. The next day promised to be so warm that I erected a little awning over my tree to shield it from the sun; this amused the children in the vicinity so much that I was quite fearful of their pulling it away; so I sat down and watched my new charge all day long.

The rest of the family laughed at me, and I had not much faith in the success of my nursing, myself, for the poor thing did not give the slightest sign of reviving.

But I had a deal of patience, if not much faith; so I watered it well that night, erected my awning again the next day, and continued my watching, and repeated this

devotion the next day, and the next; yet still that *one* green leaf hung obstinately down, and so I pulled away the awning, and left it to its fate.

But, either to spite or reward me, that one drooping, green leaf looked up in the evening, and, though it drooped again in the sun's rays, it looked up again the next evening; at last a little green bunch appeared on the stem, which grew larger and larger, until it finally burst out into delicate, but healthy green leaves; and I felt that my labors and patience were well rewarded.

How I watched for the blossoms, and eagerly held the pretty foliage aside in order, if possible, to see the buds; and when the buds *did* appear, and the poor little stick, as it had seemed to be when I picked it up from the sidewalk, held out the two wee little things in its arms of

leaves, like a young mother, proud and happy, how I loved it!

And when the buds blossomed! of all the beautiful, pure white roses that ever opened their sweet faces on the sunny world, those two were the most beautiful.

Little Charlie loved them, too, as well as I did.

He was a little lame boy, was Charlie, with a sweet, pure, white face, sweeter and purer even than my roses, and with a something underneath it, that no rose could ever have; for that something was the light of an earnest and holy little heart.

His sister Jessie used to wheel him about in a little carriage; for Charlie had never walked in his life; when he was a baby, long before he thought of standing alone, he fell down a long flight of stairs, and the doctors told his mother then, that if he ever *did* get well, that he never would

stand on his feet, and never move along of his own will.

Jessie used to wheel him along the side-walk, in front of my little garden, every morning; and as I was always at work there in the morning, I soon got acquainted with him; for he was not at all shy, although very quiet and gentle-spoken.

He sympathized deeply with my numerous misfortunes, and admired my stately lilies and scarlet verbenas, and detested my ugly tree fully as much as I did; he watched the growth of my pretty rose-tree with intense interest, and fully admired its beautiful blossoms.

When the tree began to blossom more plentifully, I used to put one white rose or bud in his little blue-veined hand, every morning.

But I thought, when I gave him the delicate buds, so like himself, that, as they

bloomed, he faded; and yet that they grew more and more like each other, for his cheek was now almost the color of the rose-leaf, and like it, he was nearer and nearer perfect every day; like it, too, he was a snow white beautiful bud that would never blossom.

But Charlie loved those buds; he would clasp them in his tiny hand, and peer with his deep blue eyes, down, down into their secret hearts; he would put them to his lips, too, sometimes, and press the soft petals to his cheek, lovingly.

I asked Jessie one day, if she put them in water after they got home, and she answered "no."

I asked her why, and after awhile she told me; an old woman, who was sick and poor, had admired the bud once in Charlie's hand, as his sister wheeled him by her door; and he was quite too unselfish a

child to keep it after that, so every day after his sister had given him all his ride, she wheeled him past the old woman's door, and he handed her his gift with a sweet angelic smile which made it all the more lovely.

"*She* puts them in a cup, and they bloom out on the window sill by her chair," said Jessie.

"Ah!" I thought to myself, when she told me of this good act, "those buds which bloom by her side on earth, will bloom by his in heaven," for I knew well what a sacrifice it was for him to give them away so cheerfully.

Day by day my white roses budded and bloomed, each more beautiful than those that bloomed before; and day by day Charlie sank deeper on his pillows and faded from our earthly sight; he was budding too, and would soon bloom, more beautiful than ever.

Yet the pangs were in my heart when I looked at his little fingers, so white and slender, and I could not help the tears, when I thought how soon it would be, when they would clasp my snowy buds no more.

One morning as he took them, I fancied he looked rather better than usual, and said so; but, strangely enough, I thought, he bent over his treasure, and when he looked up, I saw the tears were thick in his eyes, and one great drop had rolled down, and lay upon the petals like a dew-drop.

Dear Charlie!

Every morning I had expected to see Jessie come alone, and the next morning she did.

"Is Charlie worse?" asked I, anxiously.

"No, ma'am," she answered, with a great sob, "he is better now. He is dead."

"Dead!" the word fell on my heart like lead, for I had not thought he would die *so* soon.

We gathered them all, bud and blossom, and put them with him in his narrow bed; he had not changed, only I fancied that the angel look had appeared on his countenance, now.

We buried him with his white roses about him, and planted the bush over his grave, so that the beautiful flowers bud and bloom, fade and fall, all the year round, over his little form.

We gathered a few one day, Jessie and I, and carried them to the old woman who had been made happy by Charlie's hand so many times; but when we came to the little cottage, she was gone from the door, gone from the window, gone from Earth.

We well knew that both she and the little boy we loved, gather and love far

lovelier and more lasting blossoms than we will ever know on earth, yet we think that sometimes when the warm California sun falls on the little grave and brightens it, and the lovely white roses turn their pure faces upward to the sky, that the spirits of both will leave the gardens of glory and hover for a little while over the flowers they loved on earth.

THE OLD MAN IN THE GROUND.

A CALIFORNIA LEGEND.

He was a white-haired, white-bearded man, was old Señor Gomez; and, as he sailed over the broad seas in his good ship Gracia, he always took his pretty daughter Gracia with him, because the gleam of her dark hair and the glance of her black eyes seemed to put a thrill of younger life into his aged veins.

She looked as he did when he was young;—so people said who knew him then; but now, no two could be more opposite; Señor Gomez had a dark skin, and so had Gracia; but his cheek was wrinkled, and looked like leather, while hers had

under it, the mantling blush of youth, which made it look like a dark cloud tinged with the crimson of sunset.

His eyes were black and bright, and so were hers; but his had a way of looking off when you looked at him, while Gracia's looked you in the face freely and frankly, like the windows of an open and noble heart, as they were.

They lived many a hundred years ago, the old Spaniard and his pretty daughter; many a hundred years ago; when the world was younger and more ignorant that it is now; when the broad Pacific seldom tossed a ship amongst its friendly waves, and California was an undiscovered country.

But Señor Ruy Gomez was a daring, dauntless captain, and he feared neither the storms of the ocean nor the savages of the land; moreover, he had a mate as daring and dauntless as himself, and what-

ever the captain said he would do, the mate always cried "yes," because he loved Gracia Gomez, the captain's daughter, and wished to make himself pleasant to the captain, so that when he asked him for her, he would not refuse.

One night, they were close by the shore of a strange, unknown land; and Señor Gomez dreamed a strange dream that night, bidding him to land, and dig for gold; the dream implied that no one was to set foot on the strange land, save himself and his daughter; and by the time his ship should sail ten degrees to the north, and ten degrees to the south, that he, with his own hand, would have dug gold enough to load the ship, and make him richer than a prince.

This dream so impressed him, that he determined to land, and to dig for the gold, as he had been directed; so he told

his mate, whose name was Bernardo, what he intended to do, without saying any thing, however, about his dream.

"While I am on shore, Bernardo," he said, "I wish you to sail the ship—first, ten degrees to the north and back again, then, ten degrees to the south and back again; and then I, with my daughter Gracia, will come on board, and we will set sail for Spain.

"More, good Bernardo, I will give to you for your perilous duty in sailing the Gracia, a large share in the gold that I will dig."

"Master Captain," said Bernardo, "I know that gold is a noble reward for courage; but, in encountering these dangers, I would fain have the promise of another gift, more precious than all the gold of the New World,—good Señor, I mean your daughter."

But Señor Gomez answered coldly,

"Gold I will give you, but my daughter, never."

Bernardo said nothing, but he turned away from the captain with a heart full of anger, sorrow, and hatred.

That evening, when the moon was high up in the sky, and the captain was sleeping, the mate went to Gracia, as she was walking on the deck, and told her, in a half-tender, half-fierce way, of his love for her and his hatred of her father; then he proposed to her that she should return to the ship, and leave her father to find his gold and to keep it.

"We will be happy, my beautiful," he cried, "and a solitary death will be a just punishment for his tyranny."

But the little Spanish girl was not only a good and faithful daughter, but she had also a heart so pure and holy, that what

Bernardo had said filled her with horror and sorrow.

"You are crazy now," she said, "but by and by it will go away. I will not tell my father, and we will both forget what you have said."

They landed, the bearded, grasping captain, and the sweet-faced, dark-eyed girl, upon the desolate shores of the gold-haunted land; and Bernardo promised to sail the ship as the captain had bidden.

They hunted and hunted for the precious treasures, until Ruy Gomez was well nigh discouraged; for the ship had sailed away, and he greatly feared that the journey to and fro would be accomplished before he had a single nugget to show for Bernardo's reward. One night as they rested underneath a great oak, the captain bemoaned his ill-luck and his many misfortunes, and finally said to his daughter:—

"I was a fool to bring you with me; I should have found the gold long ago if I had not been obliged to drag you about with me."

He said these words very fretfully and very unkindly; for it was much harder for little Gracia to bear all these hardships and discomforts than it was for him; while she had never complained once, nor failed to do all that he required of her.

"Father, father," she cried, in astonishment, "you could not have left me."

"Hush!" he answered, crushing in his hand some little oblong smooth stones which he had picked up, "say not another word, or I will fling the stones at you." And so angry was he that the red blood glowed underneath his dark cheeks, like a scarlet flame shrouded in smoke.

"Alas!" cried Gracia, "you must be ill, father."

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"I told you to hush," he shouted, as he fulfilled his threat, and flung the hard stones full in her innocent young face.

Ah! it was cruel, cruel, cruel!

She put her two hands up before her face, her pretty face, all bruised and scratched, and wept very bitter tears; yet the tears were not for the pain in her round cheeks, but for the sharper pangs in her heart.

All the time, although they did not see him, old Karlin, the king of the mines, was hiding behind the tree and watching them; he was an ugly old elf, and so hated mankind, that far from helping them to find the gold and silver under his care, he always tried his best to have every grain of shining metal which they did find carry with it sorrow and trouble.

Here, upon the shores of this New World, he had been allowed to carry his head high for so long, that he had begun to hope that

man would never disturb him, and so when he saw Ruy Gomez and his daughter wandering through the forests, he looked upon them with any thing but kindly eyes.

Yet, even Karlin's little black eyes snapped, and he clinched his withered, brown hand angrily, when he saw Señor Gomez fling those cruel, hard stones in that innocent little face.

"You shall rue it, old Leatherskin," he thought, "for you it was, and not she, who came here to hunt for my shining gold."

So Karlin set himself to work to do ill unto the old Spaniard, if he did no good to Gracia.

Now, near the place where they then were, was one of Karlin's richest mines, and into that mine he determined to entrap the greedy old Spaniard. So that night, while they both slept on their bed of dry leaves, he scattered rich nuggets of gold

about on the ground, and great pieces of quartz, all veined in thick veins of gold; and so placed them that he felt sure they would lead Señor Gomez to the entrance of the mine.

"Once inside my domain," chuckled the withered old Karlin, "once inside, and I'm all right."

Then he gathered up the little smooth stones, whose sharp edges had so cruelly cut the delicate skin of pretty Gracia, and after looking at them curiously for awhile, he carried them into the mine and laid them carelessly down upon a little shelf of quartz.

The sun arose gloriously in that far western land, and the sweet breath of the California morning fanned the cheeks and brows of the wanderers, and awakened them to another day, as they supposed, of toil and disappointment.

As they munched their breakfast of dry cracker and fresh fruit, Gracia prattled to her father; for she soon forgave and forgot the wounds which he had inflicted.

"Papa," she said, "the sun comes up in the red sky like a ball of gold floating in blood, and I think it bodes good for us."

"Why do you say in blood?" said her father, sharply, "what has blood to do with the gold I want?"

"May be one of us will cut our fingers, papa, and find that the stone is—oh, papa, see here," and she picked up from the ground one of the nuggets of gold which the cunning Karlin had left.

"At last!" said Señor Gomez. "You *have* brought me good luck, after all, daughter."

Gracia smiled, but she hung her head and looked the other way, for somehow the words seemed to hurt her, and, without wishing it, she thought of the hand with

which the stones were thrown, was the same hand held out to her now, to smooth her soft hair; so she knew not why, but she shrank from it, and looked the other way.

Señor Gomez was too much excited to notice it, however, but went on searching and searching for more of his shining idol; and he found more, almost at every step; for he fell directly into the cunning trap which Karlin had prepared, and every step found him nearer to the entrance of the mine.

"Search for the gold, Gracia," he cried, "for truly, yon golden sun has brought us wondrous good luck. Search hard, Gracia, for my dream has come true, and I pick it up in great lumps."

Gracia did as she was bid; bending her head down under the tall, rank bushes, and parting the thick grass faithfully; but all

she found, was here and there the nest of the little brown groundbird, with its little brood of featherless babies; they were not afraid of her, for they knew no harm of her, but looked up with their bright round eyes, and opened their greedy little throats, piping loudly, and thinking, perhaps, that she had brought them a worm or so.

Then here and there she found a bunch of ripe, red strawberries, sparkling with the diamonds of the morning—but she found no gold.

Meanwhile her father had discovered the entrance to the cave, and went in; once in, he was dazzled, bewildered, lost.

"Papa, papa," called the voice of his daughter, in the wood.

He heard her, yet heard her not; for up, up, on both sides of him were walls of yellow gold, and here and there were walls of sparkling white quartz, so heavy with the

bright metal that the quartz seemed much the smaller part.

Papa, papa," said the sweet voice in the outer air.

"She must see it," he thought, "she is but weakly, but she can help to carry it away." Yet he never seemed to think of turning back, for he was so dazed and bewildered that her voice sounded as though in the mine, only far, far ahead.

He picked up great nuggets, and broke off large pieces of gold, until his pockets were full to overflowing; yet still he kept on, for that sweet, ringing voice, saying, "Papa, where are you, papa!" echoed and re-echoed through the cave.

He found upon a shelf the stones which he had flung at his child, and he took them eagerly, though he thought not what he was doing, and carried them along in his hand.

"Papa," said the voice, faintly now, for

the mine was deep in the center of a hill, and the voice could hardly be heard.

The way grew crooked, and the mine grew dark; the gold in his pockets weighed heavily, and his feet stumbled.

"Papa." So faint—so far away.

"Gracia," he cried, "my child, my little one, Gracia!"

As he spoke the word, a stone dropped from his hand, and rung sharply on the floor of the mine.

Slowly he stumbled on, and felt his way on the clammy walls of the mine; but he never seemed to think of turning back, although his daughter's voice had ceased now, and he heard only the echo of his stumbling footsteps, and of his vain though frantic calls for his child; and as he spoke her name, he noticed one stone always dropped from his hand, yet he never seemed to have less. He tried to pull the nuggets

of gold from his pockets, but they would not come; and at last he tried to turn back. Too late!

The stones which he had dropped, had turned to seeds, and the seeds had sprouted and grown with a wonderful growth, so that he was completely entangled in the long roots and the thick stems.

When these stems reached the ground, they pushed through and through, until they reached the air and sun. It is a hideous plant, bearing hideous blossoms, and the seeds of it are hard and smooth, like stones,—like, for all the world, the very stones which Don Gomez threw in Gracia's face, so many hundred years ago.

First the Indians, then the Spaniards, who succeeded them, and then the country-folks who succeeded *them*, called the plant "The old man in the ground." And the old Spaniard, so they say, is still wandering on

in the dim and dreary mine, bearing in his pockets the gold which he can not get rid of, sowing the stones in his hand, whose number is never less, and searching hopelessly and frantically for his daughter.

When Bernardo sailed from the shores of the unknown land, he had it in his heart never to return; but somehow the face of pretty Gracia drew him back after he had sailed ten degrees to the north; and when the good ship was anchored in the quiet bay, the mate determined to land and seek out the wanderers. But on the very day he reached the shore, a ragged and pitiful little figure broke through the brushwood, and ran down upon the beach.

"Gracia!" cried Bernardo, "where is thy father?"

"Lost! lost!" cried the little maiden; and for a long time she would say nothing else but that one word. At last, however,

she told Bernardo all that had happened, and tried to guide him to the place where her father had been last seen. They both searched for him long and patiently, but they found no trace of him; and a hideous weed spread itself over the ground, and impeded their footsteps. So at last they went back to the ship, and set sail for Spain; and when they reached the shores of their dear native land, a good priest married Bernardo to Gracia, and they lived together happily all the rest of their lives.

JENNIE.

She was a pretty little girl, with black eyes full of saucy light, and black hair full of curls and kinks; a smart little girl,—with her head stuffed full of Grammar and Geography, and Arithmetic at her fingers' ends; better than both, she was a *good* little girl, with a heart full of truth, earnestness, and generosity.

Of course everybody loved her; for little girls who are good and smart and pretty, and come to school in the morning, with red lips parted over their white teeth, smiling continuous "Good mornings" to everybody, are very apt to win hearts.

Even sulky Susie used to writhe her lips in a ghostly attempt at a smile when she

saw Jennie; and Katie Washbourne, who put on a great many airs with other girls, felt them melt away in her grasp before the fire of those true, honest black eyes.

And Dick Hollis! Dick *had* said that he would die for Jennie; and perhaps he might have, if he had been really brought to the test, but he never was; poor fellow, he died for something that was as miserably base and wicked as his black-eyed goddess was pure and good; he was killed in a quarrel for money.

He was a dreadfully bad boy when he first came to school, and he kept getting worse and worse, until the teacher was going to put him out altogether, when Jennie's hand stayed him from at least present disgrace and ruin.

But, alas! even she could not prevent a neglected and vicious childhood from

bearing the fruit of a wicked manhood; he became a horse-thief and a gambler, and it was a mercy to mankind that he was cut off in his career of crime before he grew old in its precepts and practice.

But sometimes, I think, he must have paused and remembered the one beautiful incident of his life; the one redeeming gleam of hope and goodness, which lighted up his otherwise dark and miserable boyhood; the one time when he *aimed*, at least, toward virtue, even if he did so only for the love of a pretty black-eyed schoolmate; and he may even have left some wicked deed undone for her sake, and thought better of his fellow-creatures because she was one of them.

How often does a good deed blossom and bring forth fruit, long after the doer has looked upon it as dead, and forgotten it.

Poor Dick! Under happier circumstances he might have been a good man, for he must have had a good place in his heart, else he had not loved Jennie so well; he must have had a touch of chivalry in his nature to have given up his evil ways and avoided his evil companions, so that she might think better of him; and those flowers!

But I must commence farther back, and tell all of the story.

Dick's mother died when he was a baby, and Dick's father might as well have been dead as far as his son was concerned; it would even have been better for Dick if he had been an orphan, for good men and women have built pleasant homes for those who have neither father nor mother, where care and kindness guard the gates, and if the inmates rarely have tenderness for a guest, they at least never have vice.

But woe, woe for those who have a careless and cruel father, and *no* mother; no wonder Dick Hollis grew up to be a bad boy; no wonder he played truant, and smoked cigar stumps and stole peaches from the fruit-stands; for who had ever tried to point out to him the better path, and encourage him to persevere in it despite the thorns which pierced his feet and the brambles which barred his way?

No one.

Stop, yes, *one*; but it was a little hand which pointed out the way, and the little feet themselves, often quivered from the thorns; yet she tried hard, and she persevered, until the tiny hand grew weak and the feet wavered and tottered.

Dear, dear little Jennie!

I think she first noticed him from seeing him punished at school; and Pity being the twin-sister of Action in some hearts,

she made up her mind to "do something" when the tears brightened her eyes.

It was not much that she *could* do, but she did that little, when occasion offered, with such a free-hearted earnestness that from that moment the heart of the incipient ruffian was at her feet, and the little was *enough.*

The occasion was this, a silver dollar which the teacher had brought to the class for some purpose, and which had been lying on the table, was missing.

Jennie, being *the* girl of the class, had been appointed by Miss Leslie as the monitor, to dust the table and put the books in order at recess; it was to her therefore that the teacher turned when she discovered her loss.

"Jennie," she said, carelessly, "what did you do with that silver dollar?"

"I left it there, on the table," was the innocent reply.

Miss Leslie searched for it; indifferently at first, and earnestly afterward, but in vain.

Jennie searched for it, carefully and strictly, but also in vain; Miss Leslie looked sharply at Dick Hollis, and made one more effort to find the missing article; in vain!

"Dick Hollis," she said, sharply, "what were you doing here at the table a little while ago?"

Dick was twisting some string at that moment so busily that he did not hear the teacher; but Tommy Brand, who sat next to him, punched him with a beaming face, to bring him back to a recollection of the troubles of this world.

"Ma'am?" he said, starting awkwardly to his feet.

"What did you come up here for a little while ago?"

Miss Leslie spoke the words *so* sharply,

as though she had already judged him, as indeed she had.

"I—I was a gitting a slate-pencil," responded the frightened boy, frightened at he knew not what.

Tommy Brand looked up from his seat, and grinned broadly in his face; he was a tall, overgrown boy, this Tommy Brand, and not at all pleasant to look at.

His clothes were too small for him, yet were put on in so slovenly and shuffling a way, that they looked ready to drop off him; his arms and legs were exceedingly long and thin, and his hands and feet exceedingly large; his joints appeared to be loose, and his head wagged on his short neck in a very unpleasant way.

Jennie did not like Tommy Brand at all, and when he leered up at poor Dick, he did not dream what a handsome pair of black eyes snapped at him.

"What?" said Miss Leslie, sharply.

Dick repeated his answer.

"No, you were not," responded the teacher, "you went up to steal that silver dollar which Jennie carelessly left on the desk, and now I want it, sir!"

"No, ma'am," said the boy, earnestly, looking tremblingly from her to Jennie, from Jennie to her, "I never touched nothing on your table. "Truly, truly I didn't; don't say I did, Miss Leslie, for truly I didn't."

He spoke very earnestly, very piteously, and the small, dull gray eyes were full of tears; yet Miss Leslie looked coldly and sternly at him, and the boys around grinned broadly, for it was very, very seldom that Dick shed tears.

Tommy Brand, especially, seemed delighted, and could hardly forbear from laughing

aloud at the boy's distress;—only Jennie pitied and believed him.

Miss Leslie investigated the matter a little more; called up one or two boys who declared they saw Dick stop and "nip something" from the table; Tommy Brand said that he saw the dollar when he went up after his speller, and Dick was the next boy who visited the table; George Rice, who visited it next, said he looked at the table, and he did not see it there.

Miss Leslie thought it was very good evidence, and said so.

"I didn't take it, I never seed it at all," said the culprit, with a choking voice. "I *never* took it, ma'am; truly, truly, I never did."

But the poor boy was prejudged, and there was no hope for him, earnest and pitiful though his words might be; yet Miss Leslie *did* feel, perhaps, a qualm of con-

science, as she took out the heavy ruler which poor Dick Hollis knew—oh! so well.

"Jennie," she said, "are you *sure* you left it on the table?"

"I—I think I did," said the little girl, "but—"

"I *seed* it there, I did," chuckled Tommy Brand.

"Hush, sir!" said the teacher.

"Miss Leslie," said Jennie, earnestly, "I don't believe Dick Hollis took it. Please don't whip him, please don't, he didn't take it, I *know* he didn't."

"*Why* do you know?" demanded the mistress.

"He doesn't look as though he did, and I don't believe he did," said Jennie, boldly.

"Come forward, Dick Hollis," said the teacher, turning contemptuously away from the little pleader, "and see if you can give

me the dollar after I have given you a whipping."

He came forward; such a miserable-looking boy! ragged and dirty, pale and freckled, blear-eyed and large-featured.

The tears were all dry in his eyes now, and on his face was a calm look; not of defiance, such as he was used to display when he received a merited whipping, but of endurance; and he looked at Jennie, who still stood by the table, with her bright eyes, the brighter for tears, and he cast upon her a look of such perfect gratitude and devotion, that he looked for the moment almost beautiful.

He said not another word to the teacher, but held out his hand, scarred and hard by many a cruel whipping, and held back the tears as he had often held them back before, right bravely.

Once, twice, thrice, left hand and right;

so many, many times. At last she stopped.

"Will you give it up now?" she asked.

"I never took it, ma'am," was the reply.

"Tommy Brand!" cried Jennie, sharply and suddenly, "you took that dollar, you know you did, and you would sit there and laugh at Dick Hollis. Give it up," she cried, imperiously, "give it up, directly, sir."

Tommy Brand shrunk and cowered into his seat; the boys and girls turned around and looked at him in utter astonishment; Miss Leslie stood with ruler uplifted, Dick Hollis with hand outstretched, and the room was as still as a church. Tommy Brand fumbled at his pockets and cowered into his seat, seeing nothing but those piercing eyes, hearing but the ringing of that childish voice, upraised in the cause of justice.

"Stand up," said Jennie, "and give it up."

Slowly, slowly, he arose, shuffling to his great feet like a mean, contemptible thief, as he was, and felt himself to be; while slowly, slowly, he drew from his pocket the identical dollar which had been missing.

Miss Leslie put down her ruler. "Take your seat, Dick Hollis," she said; "and you, Thomas Brand, I will see after school. Jennie, be seated."

Not a word of regret that the scapegrace had been unjustly punished, not a word of scorn for the miserable culprit! No, not one. "We will now go on with the lesson," she said, and that was all.

From that moment no task was too hard for Dick to learn, if Jennie could hear him recite it in the class; no sacrifice of his wicked propensities was a trial, did Jennie

but know of it; and a sudden, beautiful light dawned over him,—the light of a smile from the heart of a *good* little girl. She was never absent from school, unless she was seriously sick; so Dick Hollis felt very miserable and anxious one day when he saw Jennie's seat vacant; when he went about his work after school, he could think of nothing but that vacant seat, of nothing but the red cheeks, which now might be dreadfully pale, of the bright eyes which now perhaps were dim.

"Come, come, Dick," said Mr. Mack, who furnished Dick with his scanty wardrobe in consideration of his doing chores after school, "wake up and be a little quicker, or I'll give you something to help you, that you won't like. If you want to earn a dime, get in that load of wood after you get through with the other jobs."

Dimes were not so plentiful in Dick's pocket that he should neglect this chance, so he went to work manfully, and soon had his numerous tasks performed to the satisfaction of his not over-amiable employer; and with his hard-earned dime, he bought a bouquet of sweet spring violets for his dear idol.

He knew where she lived; yes, indeed! He had looked at the house many and many a time, until every line of its old weather-beaten front was known to him; yet he stood on the corner, and hesitated and twirled the violets around in his fingers awkwardly, and looked and hesitated crossed over to the other corner, and shuffled his feet to and fro over the pavement many times before he could finally decide to go up and ring the bell. A pale, pretty young lady came to the door, who said, as Dick held out the flowers without a word,—

"Who are these for, little boy? Jennie?"

Dick nodded emphatically, and started off, then turned his head, and said to the young lady,—

"Is she sick?"

"Very sick, indeed," was the answer. "Who will I tell her sent her these?"

"Dick; and he's sorry," said that young man, fairly terrified at his own audacity.

But that answer, "Very sick indeed!" rang in his ears all the rest of the day, and moaned through his dreams all night, and haunted him all the next day.

Every night, after that, he found some task to do for somebody, which brought him his coveted dime, and every night he rang the bell at Jennie's house, and handed the pale young lady his bunch of violets.

"How is she?" he always asked; and the answer always was,—

"Worse to night."

One night the young lady said sadly, as she took the flowers,

"She is very low now, and the doctor thinks she may never be better; wouldn't you like to see her?"

Dick hesitated; the very thought of walking through Jennie's house, and looking at her face, made him thrill all over with joy, yet he hesitated.

"You may never see her again alive," said the young lady, sadly.

Dick took off his hat with instinctive reverence, and followed her into the house without another word.

The young lady led him into the room, and crossed over to look at the little invalid, motioning him to stand by the door.

Jennie was talking then, muttering softly to herself; and a lady bending over

the other side of the bed was crying bitterly.

"She will not know you," whispered the young lady, "she has not known anybody for the last four days. But you can look at her,—she is not very much changed."

No, she was not much changed, it was true; her face was much thinner, but the eyes were still sparkling, the cheeks still red; yet even poor Dick, all unused to sickness as he was, felt that the eyes were all *too* bright, the cheeks *too* red, and that her present beauty was but the forerunner of a dreadful decay.

He looked only for a moment, and then stood back again by the door.

The old gray-bearded doctor, who held one fevered little hand in his broad palm, shook his head sadly as she prattled on in her disconnected talk.

"I *know* he didn't," she said, and the hot tears started into Dick's eyes, for he remembered when she spoke those words before.

"The lessons were so long, and the sun is rising," she said. "Mother, oh! mother, do you hear?" Then she began to sing in her soft, sweet, melancholy voice,—

"I want to be an angel,
And with the angels stand,
A crown upon my forehead,
A harp within my hand.
There right before my Saviour,
So glorious and so bright,
I'd wake the sweetest music,
And praise him day and night."

"I hear them answer, mother; oh, mother! Nellie! do you hear them, now?"

Dick's eyes were blinded with tears, but he brushed them away with his coat-sleeve and glanced over the room.

The young lady, Nellie, was sobbing

aloud, but the mother's face was buried in the bed-clothes.

"Poor little thing," said the gruff-looking old doctor, and Dick saw how the tears were chasing each other down his rough cheeks; and a heart-rending moan broke from the lips which were smothered in the bed-clothes.

"Oh, come and be an angel,
For Heaven is so bright,"

warbled the little weak voice.

"Poor thing," said the gruff old doctor again, and Dick heard another sob from the mother.

The tears welled up in his eyes again, until he could not see; something swelled in his throat, choking him; he could bear it no longer, but turned and crept down stairs, softly through the hall to the door, and out into the street.

Many wondered that night to see that

ragged boy crying bitterly as he tramped toward home, and wondered what he had done.

The next night, when the young lady came to the door, there was a smile on her lip though there *were* tears in her eyes, as she said,—

"Jennie is better, Dick, she will get well now."

And then, how strange it was, Dick cried again, harder than ever, on his way home.

One night, when he took his flowers, Nellie said to him,—

"Come in, Dick, and bid Jennie 'Good-bye,' for she is going down in the country to-morrow to get strong and well again."

So Dick saw Jennie once more; she was lying on a heap of pillows, and changed very much, she was so pale and thin.

"Good-bye, Dick," she said, in little more

than a whisper,—for Jennie's voice was very weak now,—"thank you for those pretty flowers. I will love violets now more than ever:" and she smiled and held out her hand.

Poor Dick took it awkwardly,—that little white hand, and said "Good-bye."

He never saw Jennie again; she stayed in the country *so* long, and his father was *so* hard; so many evil ways were open to him, and there was no one to say to him "Nay," so he went back to his evil ways, and was killed at last, over a gambling table.

But we know that dear merciful Father will judge him tenderly; He will remember the hard paths that he walked, and the many temptations which beset him.

And may be Jennie's voice will be heard before the great Throne, pleading for mercy and forgiveness for the poor sinner;

we know that her dear earnest voice will be heard, for we know that truly God loveth her.

THE END.

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